

THE LIVING AGE.

SEVENTH SERIES
VOLUME XXIX.

No. 3202—Nov. 18, 1905.

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Vol. CCXLVII.

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PUBLISHED EVERY SATURDAY BY

THE LIVING AGE COMPANY,

6 BEACON STREET, BOSTON.

TERMS OF SUBSCRIPTION.

FOR SIX DOLLARS remitted directly to the Publishers, THE LIVING AGE will be punctually forwarded for a year, free of postage, to any part of the U. S. or Canada.

Postage to foreign countries in U. P. U. is 3 cents per copy or \$1.56 per annum.

Remittances should be made by bank draft or check, or by post-office money order, if possible. If neither of these can be procured, the money should be sent in a registered letter. All postmasters are obliged to register letters when requested to do so. Drafts, checks, express, and money orders should be made payable to the order of THE LIVING AGE Co.

Single copies of THE LIVING AGE, 15 cents.

HERITAGE.

Great deeds are born of grief and
strife,
Of anguish, and of tears;
Not what we would is brought to life,
But what have willed the Years.

We would create so brave, so gay,
So beautiful a thing,
Regarding it, all men would say,
"There is no sorrowing!"

But Sorrow—(Mother of brave deeds)—
And Love—who rules the Years,
Knowing Humanity's stern needs,
Give us—a Child of 'ears.

Ruth Young.

The Speaker.

THE VAGABOND.

I cannot bide the sober town,
With decent villa, church and square;
Nor madam with her stylish gown,
Nor master with his glossy hair.
I cannot bide the sober town,
Nor madam with her stylish gown.

But I would over vale and hill,
And draw the breath of distance free.
And roam from opal dawn until
The twilight creeps across the lea.
Oh! I would over vale and hill,
And sleep in barn or ruin'd mill.

For I a vagabond was born,
I love to wander far and wide,
And seek out places most forlorn,
And evil hills where men have died.
For I a vagabond was born,
And love the twilight and the morn.

I love all wild and woeful lands
Where I may talk with woods and
streams,
Or walk on desolate sea sands,
And tell the ocean all my dreams.
I love all wild and woeful lands,
And Ocean's dolorous wet sands.

I love to watch the sunset die,
And hear the large night's solemn
words,
And on the moonlit heather lie,
And wake to greet the morning birds.
I love to watch the sunset die,
And on the moonlit heather lie.

For oh! I hate the sober town,
I hate the villa, church, and square,
I long to knock the houses down,
And ruffle master's glossy hair.
For oh! I hate the sober town,
And madam's modish silken gown.

But ah! the country air is pure,
And ah! the country lads are true,
And loving comrades they'll endure;
They'll stand by me, they'll stand by
you,

But ah! the country air is pure,
And country friendships long endure.
Douglas Goldring.

The Academy.

THE CRY OF THE SLAIN.

[Many of the bodies of those killed in the
Boer War are being removed to the town
cemeteries.]

What is the cry that breaks in on our
sleeping?

Who is it cometh to trouble our rest,
Coming to bear us away to the city,
Crying our graves are apart and
unblest?

Is not our blood more than oil of
anointing,
Bullet-scored rock than the shade of
a dome,
More than the fairest of marble
engraving,
Praise of our country and tears of
our home?

Are not the prayers that our comrades
prayed o'er us
While the shrill bullet sped fierce
on its way
More than the blessing a stranger can
give us,
More than the prayers that unmen-
aced ye pray?

Leave us to lie where the bullet hath
laid us,
Valley or plain or the stony hillside,
Deep in the trench that our comrades
have made us,
Out in the wilds where we suffered
and died.

Lucy Lyttelton.

The Spectator.

THE NEW CHEMISTRY.

THE INTERPRETATION OF RADIO-ACTIVE CHANGES.

Who has forgotten how, but a few years ago, Madame Curie endowed chemistry with a new method of research which already has revealed to us a group of substances more wonderful and more interesting, perhaps, than any that have been discovered since the isolation of phosphorus by Brand in 1670? And who does not remember how the general interest in these new substances was intensified when Sir Wm. Ramsay and Mr. Soddy, by means of the spectroscope, recognized helium in a tube containing the emanation of radium, and thus led many to exclaim that, after all, the transmutation of the elements might prove to be no mere dream of the alchemists, but a sober reality and one of the realized assets of the twentieth century? Finally, do we not know that to-day the new Cambridge School of Physicists bids us grind some of our most cherished images into dust, and adopt in their place ideas about the nature of matter, ether, and electricity which seem well calculated to make the sober-minded philosophers of the last two centuries turn in their graves? Great discoveries and new ideas such as these are bound to make themselves felt over all the fields of science, and perhaps those who find such matters interesting may not be unwilling to return once more to the new chemistry, with the object of learning, if we can, what may be the real effects, up to the present, of these epoch-making researches and novel ideas in that important department of experimental science.

For nearly three generations the great conception of Dalton, which has been described as "one of the three

¹ Dalton first made his ideas on this subject known in the course of a verbal communica-

keynotes of modern science," that "the ultimate particles of all simple bodies are *atoms* incapable of further division, and each of them possessed of particular weights which may be denoted by numbers," has served to interpret every great advance in chemical knowledge. Is this conception still acceptable to-day, in the fifth year of the twentieth century? And, if not, how does the fundamental theory of chemistry stand at this moment? These are some of the questions discussed in the following pages.

There are two ways of reading a novel. Everyone knows that. You may begin upon the first page and go forwards, or you may begin upon the last page or the last chapter and work your way backwards. Those who adopt the latter mode sometimes make a new start after a while, cut the first pages of their book, and read it honestly through—a thing they might never have done had they begun at first at the beginning, and so I think the practice may perhaps be defended. But however that may be, I am going to ask my readers to excuse me if I begin my story at the wrong end, and plunge almost at once into what Professor Rutherford told the Royal Society about radio-activity and radio-active substances a few months ago in his illuminating Bakerian lecture, which was delivered, I may remark, almost on the centenary of the birth of the atomic theory.¹ This plan will be all the more convenient because the Bakerian lecture summed up all that had been done at the date of its delivery, so far, at least, as the work concerns us at this moment.

It has frequently happened that I have referred to my friend Dr. Thomson, of Glasgow, on August 26, 1904.

great advances in science have been intimately connected with the invention of a new instrument or with the improvement of an old one. Thus the spectroscope first made it possible for astronomers to study seriously the chemical composition of the sun. Liebig's invention of a trustworthy method of analyzing compounds such as those which occur in the bodies of plants and animals laid the foundations of the greatest department of chemistry, the so-called "organic chemistry." And the weighing of molecules first really became practicable over a sufficiently wide field after Dumas had worked out his method for comparing the weights of equal volumes of the vapors of volatile liquids and solids. In the case before us we have an almost equally striking instance, for much of the work discussed in this article, and much more of equal importance, could hardly have been carried out so readily but for improvements which have made the gold-leaf electroscope an instrument of considerable precision, and a part of the necessary equipment of the chemical laboratory. It may be helpful, perhaps, if I briefly describe this instrument and the method of using it.

The gold-leaf electroscope, in its simplest form, consists essentially of nothing more than two strips of gold leaf suspended inside an inverted glass shade by means of a metallic rod. The rod, well insulated by means of sulphur, is carried by the ebonite cover of the shade, through which it projects externally, and usually terminates in a knob, or a flat, circular plate of metal. Given this simple instrument, and a large stick of sealing-wax, you may take your first steps as an investigator of radio-activity. The material to be experimented upon, unless you can borrow a little radium, will cost you more than the electroscope itself, but need not cost you much, as only a very minute quantity would be required for

the simple experiments needed by many of us, as by Faraday himself, to fix our ideas and give reality to our notions concerning the use of a new or unfamiliar instrument.

If you charge your rod of sealing-wax with electricity by rubbing one end of it with a warm, dry flannel, and then bring the charged end near the knob of the electroscope the gold leaves will suddenly fly apart, but they will collapse again if you take away the sealing-wax. If, however, you touch the knob for an instant with a finger while keeping the electrified sealing-wax in position, and then remove the latter, the gold leaves will remain apart, standing out at a definite angle, which you can measure with the aid of a paper scale. The gold leaves stand out thus because they now carry similar charges of electricity, and these repelling one another force and keep the leaves asunder. If the leaves are well insulated they will remain apart for a considerable time, and, indeed, may relapse so slowly that you can detect no motion at all; but if you touch any part of the metallic rod when they are charged, the electricity will escape through your body to the earth, and they will collapse instantly. The same result will follow if you bring a fragment of a radium salt, or any other strongly radio-active substance, near the knob of the electroscope, for all such substances ionize the air—that is, make it a conductor of electricity—and thus enable the charge carried by the gold leaf system to escape at a more or less rapid rate, according to the ionizing power of the material and its proximity to the metallic conductor. Radio-activity was originally discovered and for some time studied by means of the sensitized films used in photography, but these now are usually replaced by instruments such as the electroscope and the electrometer, partly because all types of radiations

do not come into play when sensitized films are employed, and partly because the latter are not very suitable for quantitative experiments. It need hardly be added that various precautions must be taken and highly sensitive instruments employed in order to do work of the highest class.

I think I may venture to assume that my readers are more or less familiar with some of the leading facts about radium and its companions: that they know, for example, that radium occurs in minute quantities in pitchblende; that it is always found in company with the more plentiful element uranium; that, chemically speaking, it is allied to calcium, the metal present in limestone and quicklime; that it exhibits a definite spectrum, and, therefore, has been ranked as an element in the ordinary sense in which the chemist uses that term; that its atom is one of the heaviest that has yet been met with; that it gives off plentifully certain radiations which exhibit wonderful powers of generating light and heat, render various minerals phosphorescent, cause the air to conduct electricity, &c.; and that it emits an emanation, of which more anon. Finally, that it does these things for years and years without any perceptible diminution of its powers, and will, it is calculated, continue to do so for many thousands of years before its capacities are exhausted. Therefore about most of them I need say no more. But the study of the radiations and emanations of radium and its fellows has led to results of deep interest to the chemist, and about these there is much to say.

It has been settled for some time that the radiations of radium are not, as was at first supposed, merely Röntgen rays, but are composed of rays of three distinct types. First, there are particles as heavy as, or heavier than, atoms of hydrogen, the

lightest gas, which carry positive charges of electricity. Secondly, there are particles, or corpuscles, often called "electrons," a thousand times smaller than hydrogen atoms, which carry negative charges of electricity, move with velocities which in some cases are only one-tenth less than that of light itself, and which are so penetrating that they escape readily from vessels made of glass or through thin sheets of aluminium or copper, and, in fact, can only be imprisoned securely in well-closed vessels of thick sheet lead. And, lastly, there are radiations which are not to be distinguished from Röntgen rays, and never appear alone, but always in company with electrons. These last rays cannot be imprisoned even in a moderately substantial leaden casket. The three types are known respectively as the α rays, the β rays, and the γ rays. They all ionize air, and, therefore, can be detected by means of the electroscope or electrometer. Owing to their unequal powers of penetrating alien matter, such as sheets of paper and metal, it is possible to separate rays of one type from those of another type, to a more or less satisfactory extent, by using filters made of suitable materials.

At a comparatively early stage in the study of the radio-activity of uranium and thorium a most striking fact was established about them. It was this—that by appropriate treatment we can deprive each of them of its activity, or perhaps I should say, divide each of them into active and inactive fractions. Thus, if you bring a fixed amount of a salt of uranium into a suitable position in the neighborhood of a sufficiently delicate and charged electroscope, and deduce the ionizing power of the salt from the rate at which the gold leaves move as the instrument loses its charge: then dissolve the salt, add excess of solution of am-

monium carbonate, filter off the small precipitate which falls, recover the salt left in the filtrate by boiling it down to dryness, and measure the activity of each of the fractions thus obtained as before:—you will find that the main portion of the salt—viz. that recovered from the solution—has retained little or no ionizing power, but that the small precipitated portion is, in proportion to its mass, many hundred times more active than the original salt. On the other hand, and this is most significant, if you put the two fractions aside and re-examine them after a few months, you will discover that the uranium salt has become, again, as active as ever, whilst the intensely active precipitate will have lost every trace of activity.

The above remarkable discovery about uranium and uranium X, as the active precipitate is called, was made a few years ago by Sir Wm. Crookes and M. H. Becquerel. About the same time similar observations were made concerning thorium by Professor Rutherford and Mr. Soddy, who found, moreover, that thorium not only yields a highly active substance, called thorium X, analogous to uranium X, but gives off in addition an active, elusive emanation which can be passed through plugs of cotton-wool, bubbled through water, and collected, with accompanying air, in receivers, as if it were a gas, without destroying its activity. This emanation loses its activity like uranium X and thorium X, but more rapidly, so rapidly, in fact, that only about 2 per cent. of its power remains after the expiration of six minutes:—a fact which serves to distinguish the emanation from thorium X—for the latter still retains 50 per cent. of its activity at the end of four days, so that, even if the latter were not a solid and the former gaseous we could still be quite sure that they are distinct substances—and which assures us also

that the emanation is not, as otherwise we might have supposed, merely the vapor of thorium X.

Now what is the meaning of these singular phenomena? Are we to suppose that uranium and thorium when roughly handled become, as it were, fatigued, and recover their radio-activity only after prolonged rest, or must we regard them as mixtures of inactive and active substances? Consider the facts. We can separate a sample of either of these metals into a large inactive fraction, which gradually again becomes as active as the original material, and a very small but highly active fraction, which in time loses all its activity; while, in the case of thorium, there is produced, also, a gas—the emanation—which is radio-active but loses its powers very quickly indeed. Does it not seem clear that uranium and thorium, as ordinarily met with, are mixtures? That they consist chiefly of inactive substances which undergo continuous change, producing in the one case the radio-active uranium X, and in the other case thorium X, and that these, in their turn, undergo decay, leaving inactive residues, and also, in the case of thorium X, emitting the active emanation mentioned above? In short, are we not face to face with chemical phenomena of a new order?

If this view of the matter is correct, then two new questions at once arise. Do the changes described above tell the whole story, or is there more to follow? And, again, how do the radiations, the α , β , and γ rays, come in, how are they related to these changes?

One of the most striking facts about radio-activity is this. It is, so to speak, "catching." If you expose a glass rod, a bottle, a basin, a block of wood, or any such object to a few milligrams of radium, you will find soon that these acquire in some degree the power

of discharging an electroscope, like radium itself. Indeed, after working with radium for some time an experimenter finds that everything in his laboratory, the walls of the room, and worst of all, he himself, has become radio-active. Now, this is very troublesome, and probably has led in the past to mistakes of various kinds. The effect is not permanent, it wears off and becomes, in time, more or less negligible, but recent investigations seem to indicate that the last traces of "excited activity," as this phenomenon is called, are not dispelled completely in the case of radium in less than forty years.

Most of us know that a magnet induces magnetism in any piece of iron brought near it, even though they do not touch; and again, that bodies can be charged with electricity, as we charge the electroscope in the experiment described above, by bringing strongly electrified objects near them. And so we might very easily make the mistake of regarding "excited activity" as an inductive effect similar to these. In reality it is nothing of the kind, but is closely connected with emanations like the emanation of thorium. Uranium, which emits no emanation, produces no excited activity on objects placed near it. No activity is excited by radium or thorium if they are placed in a box provided with a secure cover, even though that cover consists only of the thinnest sheet of mica, but, on the other hand, a paper screen through which the emanation can pass does not act like screens of glass, metal, or mica. The amount of excited activity produced in any given case is proportional to the amount of emanation present, and a sample, say, of thoria (oxide of thorium) has but little power of producing excited activity immediately after most of its emanation has been removed. Finally, excited activity seems to be something

deposited by the emanation, something possessing definite physical and chemical properties, for, on the one hand, if you expose a platinum wire to thoria in such a way as to render it radio-active, and then heat it strongly, you find that the excited activity can be driven from the wire, and deposited on cool objects placed near it; and, on the other hand, experiments show that the activity is basic, soluble in some acids as the bases are, but insoluble in the alkali ammonia. Thus it seems clear that excited activity is due to substances, solid substances, deposited by the emanations, and is not the result of an inductive action like that of a magnet on a piece of steel. One property of matter has not been identified in the case of these substances; excited activity has not been shown to have mass, for the quantities to be dealt with are so minute that, at present, they are beyond the range of the most delicate balance.

Thus the plot thickens. Where a few years ago we had the single element "thorium," we find, to-day, thorium, thorium X, thorium emanation, and excited activity, whilst the last substance, as we shall see, forms the source of still other members of this singular series.

I must now explain how it has been possible to recognize and sort out all these mysterious substances, in spite of the fact that most of them occur in quantities so minute that but for their radio-active powers they might never have become known to us. Let us suppose that we have samples of the emanations of thorium and radium—for radium produces an emanation—and that we measure their ionizing powers at intervals of sixty seconds. If we do this,² it will not be long before we dis-

² It must not be supposed that the actual process is by any means so simple or free from complications as might appear from this brief reference to a really difficult and refined experiment.

cover a marked difference between them. The activity of the thorium emanation will be found to diminish rapidly, so rapidly, in fact, that only the half of it will remain at the end of a single minute. In the case of the radium emanation the result will be very different. In this case the ionizing power will remain so nearly steady that possibly no change may be detected at first. But if we lengthen the intervals between our observations sufficiently, we shall discover that the activity of this emanation falls to one-half its original amount in about four days. A repetition of the two experiments will give similar results, and if we extend our observations to other radio-active substances we shall find that the activity of each decays at a characteristic rate. In the case of radium, for example, the rate of decay is slow, so that only half of it would be transformed in about eight hundred years. In the case of uranium a thousand million years would be required to produce the same effect, whilst the emanation of actinium has so fleeting an existence that in less than four seconds the half of its power is already gone. Need anything more be said to show the value of this new, though difficult, method of research, this new gift from physics to chemistry? Is a fresh radio-active substance discovered? We have only to learn the law of the decay of its activity, and we shall know whether it is really new, or merely an old friend in a new guise. Do we wish to learn the effect of heating an excited activity from a given source to a high temperature? Then all we have to do is to render a platinum rod active by exposing it to the emanation which produces this excited activity, to measure the rate at which the activity decays, and then, after recharging the rod, to heat it to the desired temperature inside a cool cylinder, and afterwards measure the

rate of decay of what remains on the rod, and also that of the portion which condenses on the cylinder, and we may hope to discover what we desire to know, although we can neither see, feel, nor weigh the material to be investigated.

When we carefully consider all the facts now before us—and we must remember that they apply more or less to all the substances mentioned here—the conclusion seems inevitable that these radio-active substances, uranium, thorium, radium, and actinium, are all of them, as already suggested, subject to continuous change. For some time after the thorium X has been removed from a sample of thorium the latter evolves but little emanation, whilst the thorium X, or rather the solution containing it, yields emanation plentifully. In the course of time the thorium recovers its power, and yields emanation as freely as at first, but we can again deprive it of this power by removing the thorium X, and we may repeat the process time after time. Is it not clear that the power of producing emanation belongs to thorium X, and that thorium X, in its turn, is constantly produced at the expense of the thorium? Again, excited activity is produced on bodies exposed to the emanation; it is not a gas like the emanation itself, but behaves, as we have seen, like a volatile solid. Can we doubt that the deposit which produces the excited activity is a product of the decay of the emanation? Is it not plain, on the facts before us, that in these products we have the outcome of a whole series of chemical changes—that thorium continuously produces thorium X, that thorium X emits the emanation, and that this in its turn leaves upon everything it touches a deposit which gives rise to the so-called excited activity? Remembering, again, that thorium can be separated from thorium X by the ordinary laboratory process of

precipitation, that the emanation given off by thorium X behaves like a gas, and that the deposit which gives rise to excited activity is evidently a volatile solid, must we not conclude that the changes we investigate here, though they stand apart in many respects, have much in common with ordinary chemical changes, and consist, probably, in decompositions not altogether unlike those familiar to us in ordinary laboratory practice? Two characteristics, however, distinguish radio-active changes from ordinary chemical changes. First, the expulsion, during the progress of the changes, of particles carrying positive and negative charges of electricity (the α and β rays), and secondly, at any rate in the case of radium, as everyone knows, the emission of a quantity of energy so enormous, considering the quantity of matter involved, that some eminent authorities have hesitated to admit that it can possibly be derived from internal sources. It will give some idea of the importance of this last feature if I mention that it is calculated that a given volume of radium emanation gives out during its decay about five million times as much heat as is set free by exploding an equal volume of a mixture of oxygen and hydrogen to form water.

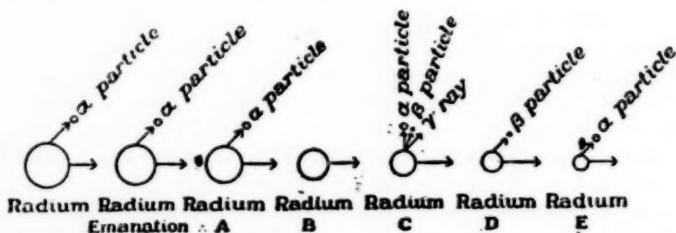
We must now turn our attention to the radiations, the α , β , and γ rays, thrown off during radio-active transformations. These are very important. First on theoretical grounds, because according to a modern view we may suppose that the atoms of the chemist consist of more or less complex systems built up of positive and negative particles. Secondly, on practical grounds, since but for these rays and their power of ionizing air we might still be ignorant of the very existence of radium and actinium and of their extraordinary properties. And, again, because by investigating separately the

rates at which the activities corresponding to the various types of ray rise and fall in the case of the excited activity derived from each of the chief radio-active substances, Professor Rutherford has got together a body of evidence which has enabled him to make rapid progress with the analysis of these changes.

To give some idea of the method employed, I may remind my readers that whilst all the radiations emitted by radio-active bodies can ionize air, and, therefore, can influence the rate of discharge of a gold leaf electroscope or other similar instrument, they do not all penetrate obstacles such as sheets of cardboard, glass, or metal with equal facility, and that, consequently, rays of the three types can be separated from one another to a considerable extent. If, for example, at any stage in its decay radio-active matter causes the discharge of the electroscope when the matter is enclosed in a substantial leaden vessel, then we may be sure that it emits γ rays, for only these can pass through lead; whilst if a sheet of cardboard is substituted for the lead it becomes possible for β rays also to reach the electroscope. By taking advantage of such facts as these, it has been found possible to obtain curves indicating the decay of excited activity, as measured by given rays, in a number of cases, and from the study of these curves Professor Rutherford has arrived at highly interesting conclusions. He finds that the decay of an excited activity is by no means a simple phenomenon, but consists, in the cases examined, of a succession of changes, each accompanied by the expulsion of particular rays, and each of which produces a characteristic product. He finds that in the decay of radium, for example, there is produced not only an emanation (there is no radium X), but also, by the decay of this, a whole series of distinct sub-

stances which for the present are named radium A, radium B, radium C, radium D, and radium E; radium D being a relatively stable substance, which may be identified by the fact that no less than forty years would expire before its activity would fall to one-half of its original value. And again as regards the accompanying rays he finds first, that at the earlier stages of the changes studied α rays only are emitted. Secondly, that γ rays seem to appear only in company with β rays, though β rays may occur alone. Thirdly, that rays of all three kinds seem to be emitted at one

stage or another of the disintegration in every case, and lastly that rayless changes usually occur at some stage, though not always at corresponding stages. The following diagram, which applies to radium, shows the order in which the various changes occur in this case, the nature of the product of each change, and also the rays which accompany each successive transformation. It is taken from the Bakerian lecture, and will perhaps make the matter more intelligible than further words. It will at any rate indicate the complexity of the problem.



As will be seen, the smaller circles stand for the α rays or particles, the small black dots for β rays or particles, and the larger circles for the particles of radium, radium emanation, &c. If, as there is reason to expect, it should presently be established that uranium is the parent of radium, it will be necessary to extend the series illustrated by the above conventional diagram by the addition of at least one more term.

If radium is an element, and consists of atoms, I think it must be admitted that these recent researches on the radio-substances support the idea that the constitution of the chemical atoms may be very complex, and to that extent they are inconsistent with the atomic theory as formulated by Dalton. It will be noticed, however, that they do not weaken our belief that matter is discontinuous, or atomic, in structure, nor greatly affect the posi-

tion of Dalton's theory in its application to chemistry. They do not suggest, for example, that atoms of the elements do not exist, nor do they forbid us to conclude that chemical combination and chemical decomposition respectively consist in the coming together and parting of atoms having fixed weights, as supposed by Dalton. On the other hand, they raise some doubts in our minds as to whether the radio-active substances are really elementary in their nature. They offer, as Professor Rutherford has pointed out, no evidence to support the assumption which some were inclined at first to make, that helium is the final product of the transformation of radium; for many changes occur after the stage at which helium makes its appearance, whilst the expulsion of the α particles, which may not improbably be helium atoms, would still leave a much heavier particle than an atom of helium

behind. If we suppose, with Professor Rutherford, that the α particles of radium consist of helium atoms, which agrees fairly well with what we know about their masses, then it seems to follow that the α particles expelled from uranium and other radio-active substances must also consist of helium, although these substances have not yet been proved to produce that element during their disintegration. And if this be so, must we not consider these radio-active forms of matter to be compounds of helium with some other known or unknown substances, and not elements as has hitherto been supposed?

If, in concluding, we sum up what has been done so far, we may say, I think, that if the investigators of radio-activity have not yet definitely sapped the foundations of chemistry, they

have, nevertheless, done truly great things. They have given us new and splendid methods of chemical research; they have introduced us to a class of reactions which are as novel as they are interesting and surprising, and they have enriched chemistry, it would seem, with a large group of new and astonishing compounds, which, paradoxical as it may appear, are so stable that we cannot break them up by the chemical and physical forces at our command, and yet so unstable that they undergo spontaneously continuous disintegrations accompanied, in one case at least, by the emission of energy on a scale which transcends all our previous experience. In a word, they have put into our possession a new domain which is equally remarkable for its present yield and for its promise of future harvests.

The Cornhill Magazine.

W. A. Shenstone.

THE MAKING OF A GOVERNMENT.

Macaulay, writing to his sister Hannah on December 19, 1845, says: "It is an odd thing to see a Ministry making. I never witnessed the process before. Lord John Russell has been all day in his inner library. His ante-chamber has been filled with comers and goers, some talking in knots, some writing notes at tables. Every five minutes somebody is called into the inner room. As the people who have been closeted come out, the cry of the whole body of expectants is, 'What are you?' I was summoned almost as soon as I arrived, and found Lord Auckland and Lord Clarendon sitting with Lord John. After some talk about other matters, Lord John told me that he had been trying to ascertain my wishes, and that he found I wanted leisure and quiet more than salary and business. Labouchere had told him this. He therefore offered me the Pay Office, one of

the three places which, as I have told you, I should prefer. I at once accepted it."

But this ministry was fated not to be formed. Both Lord Grey and Lord Palmerston, two leading members of the Whig party, wanted the Foreign Office, and neither would recognize a superior claim in the other. Macaulay, from whose very lips the cup of office was thus rudely dashed, accepted the disappointment most philosophically. Writing to his sister the day after he had sent the other letter, he says: "All is over. Late at night, just as I was undressing, a knock was given at the door of my chambers. A messenger had come from Lord John with a short note. The quarrel between Lord Grey and Lord Palmerston had made it impossible to form a Ministry. I went to bed and slept sound."

When we come to consider the in-

interesting process of making a Government, the first question that arises is, What is the chief test of a man's capacity for office? Under our Constitution, with its free and unfettered Parliament, of which the Ministers must be members, a deliberative assembly where everything is made the subject of talk, talk, talk, and provided with a Reporters' Gallery for the dissemination of its debates through the Press, it is inevitable that a man's fitness for a post in the Administration should be decided mainly by his gift of speech. It must often prove a false standard of judgment. Glibness of tongue is certainly not a necessary qualification for the discharge of the important administrative duties of government. Still, the fact remains that the ready talker with but little practical experience of affairs has a better chance of a portfolio than the man of trained business capacity who is tongue-tied. Perhaps debaters are more useful in an Administration than business men. A story is told of Disraeli which certainly points to that conclusion. Once, when forming a Government, he offered the Board of Trade to a man who wanted the Local Government Board, as he was better acquainted with the municipal affairs of the country than its commerce. "It doesn't matter," said Disraeli; "I suppose you know as much about trade as Blank, the First Lord of the Admiralty, knows about ships." After all, perhaps, it is a thing of no great concern. Are there not capable permanent officials in the various departments of the State, whose duty it is to look after administrative details? The simple task of the Minister, as he sits behind the scenes in an office at Whitehall, is to see that things are done in harmony with the political policy of his party. What seems to be absolutely essential to the prosperity of an Administration is that in the Houses of Parliament,

open as they are to the gaze of the country, it should have at its service a number of able debaters. The measures of the Government have to be submitted to the judgment of a deliberative assembly, and accordingly the most successful Minister is he whose readiness in debate, whose gift of clear and forcible exposition of party principles, enables him convincingly to expound and defend these measures.

It follows, therefore, that when the General Election has pronounced the sentence of condemnation on the existing Government, and a new administration is called to the service of the country, selection for office is restricted to those who have won distinction as debaters in Opposition. On the benches to the left of Mr. Speaker are numbers of young men ambitious of office, eagerly pushing themselves to the front on that conspicuous field of political activity, under the eyes of the Reporters' Gallery, most constant in their attendance, ever watching for an opportunity to strike a blow at once for their party and their own reputation, in the hope that in the day of victory they shall have the natural reward for their services. Some of them are capable of talking brilliantly upon any subject. These aspire to be Secretaries of State. Others, not so remarkable for general ability or so glib of tongue, confine themselves to particular departments of administration. It is the endeavor of each to obtain a mastery of the business details of some special office—Foreign, Home, Treasury, Colonial, Army, Navy, Post Office, Trade, or Agriculture—looking for an Under-Secretaryship, in the expectation of ultimately attaining, after some years of diligent and capable service, to Cabinet rank. Yet the qualities needed for success in office are often entirely different from those that bring fame and renown in Opposition. Gladstone said of Robert Lowe, whom he

appointed Chancellor of the Exchequer in his first administration, on the strength of the reputation which that slashing debater had made in Opposition, that he was "splendid in attack, but most weak in defence"; that he was "capable of tearing anything to pieces, but of constructing nothing." But it is only after the brilliant swash-buckler of Opposition has been tried in office that his incapacity and weakness in the true gifts of statesmanship are discovered.

Besides the pushful young men in the ranks on the back benches, with their abounding sense of life and virility, there are the placid, steady-going veterans on the front Opposition bench who have already won their spurs, the survivors of the office-holders when the party was last in power. Many of them are men who have grown old in the service of the party, men with wrinkled faces and bald heads and stooped forms; but their interest in public affairs has not in the least abated, and they are still eager to return to office. It might be supposed that the weighty responsibility of office is a burden to be avoided rather than coveted by the well-to-do old—the world has such pleasant delights, apart from politics, with which they might occupy the leisure of the close of their day. But that is an idle supposition. It is true that in the Senate of Rome, to which election was for life, there was a special law providing that no senator over sixty should be summoned to its meetings. Did any Roman ever willingly acquiesce in it except the physically incapable? In modern England human nature is exactly what it was in ancient Rome. The grievance of the publicist approaching seventy would be, not that he should be dragged from seclusion and quiet to sit for hours of a morning in an office at Whitehall, reading documents, and attend at the House of

Commons till late at night, but that, with his craving for public life still unsatisfied—for once tasted its spell for ever lasts—he should be set aside in the distribution of offices which follows his party's triumph at the polls.

These are the two classes—the old but the tried, the able but the untrained young—from which the Prime Minister draws the members of his Administration. He is not entirely unfettered in his choice. It is not open to him merely to sit down in his study and, surveying the various capacities of the most prominent members of his party in both Houses of Parliament, select those who have proved themselves possessed of the qualities of character, ability, and training most essential to success in office. His task it is to satisfy as far as possible claims for office as conflicting as they are urgent, and at the same time to give to his Administration that weight and authority which is necessary to win the confidence of the country. Gladstone, who formed no fewer than four Administrations—an almost unprecedented record in constitutional history—used to draw up on slips of paper a list of the various offices, placing opposite each, as alternatives, the names of three or four more or less eligible men, and then, by a process of sifting, arriving at the definite list. But this method, which, no doubt, most Prime Ministers adopt, is not at all the simple matter it looks. It has to be followed out with exceeding care and circumspection. For every post in the Ministry there are at least three or four claimants, all of them influential members of the party, old or young, each of whom thinks the office on which he has his eye ought to be his by every title of personal fitness and of services rendered to the party. To adjust these rival claims is, as I have said, no easy task for the Prime Minister. Some of the office-seekers, those especially who

feel their chances are small, insist upon personal interviews, in order to set forth their pretensions fully and unanswerably, and the serious loss the nation should suffer were it not to have the advantage of their services. Every post brings shoals of letters from members of Parliament and leading party men in the country, strongly urging the appointment of this one or that to a post in the Ministry, or his inclusion in the Cabinet.

Another important consideration of which the Prime Minister is obliged to take heed is the equitable distribution of the offices of the Administration between the House of Lords and the House of Commons. The Chancellor of the Exchequer must be in the representative Chamber, as the hereditary legislators have no control over taxation. The holders of all the other prominent offices may be in one House or the other, as the Prime Minister thinks most convenient. But it has now become a rule, from which probably there will never be a departure, of placing the Home Secretary—the Minister whose department comes most closely into touch with the ordinary life of the citizen—in the House of Commons, and giving the Foreign Secretary—the Minister whose duties are most delicate and responsible—the greater Parliamentary freedom and leisure of the house of Lords. Mr. Balfour declared in the House of Commons, during the Session of 1905, that the Foreign Minister would never again be seen in the Lower Chamber unless the House was prepared deliberately to release him from the ordinary obligations of a member. "Because, if you ask him," continued the Prime Minister, "to come down at two o'clock, or a quarter-past, to answer questions, or when his own office is under discussion; if you require him to come down, as my right hon. friends are required to come down, when-

ever there is a Government division or an important Government debate; if you require him to be here throughout the whole afternoon, to come again, if need be, at nine, and at the same time to carry on the work of such an office as the Foreign Office, he cannot do it. I respectfully say it with full knowledge both of what the House of Commons requires and what is required of the Minister for Foreign Affairs."

The other Secretaries of State may be in either the House of Lords or the House of Commons; but in whatever Chamber the Secretary may be, the Under-Secretary of the same department must be in the other. There are, moreover, two offices in the Government for which Roman Catholics are ineligible—the Lord Chancellorship of England and the Lord Lieutenancy of Ireland. In 1891 Gladstone brought in a Bill "for the removal of the religious disabilities of Roman Catholics to hold the offices of Lord Chancellor of England and Lord Lieutenant of Ireland." It was opposed by the Unionist Government then in power, and was defeated by 256 votes to 223. It was known as "The Ripon and Russell Relief Bill," as it was well understood that if the Bill were carried Gladstone on his return to office intended to make Lord Ripon Lord Lieutenant of Ireland and Sir Charles Russell Lord Chancellor of England.

The process by which the Government is formed is, constitutionally, most interesting; but even in the best of circumstances, and apart altogether from the limitations to his unfettered choice which I have set out, it must indeed be harassing to the Prime Minister. If his power and influence are great, so are his embarrassments and difficulties. "Lord Grey is in a dreadful state of anxiety and annoyance; thinks he shall break down under his load," wrote Lord Tavistock to his brother, Lord John Russell, in 1830,

during the making of the first Reform Administration. Disraeli, speaking in the House of Commons in March 1873, described the constitution of a new Government as "a work of great time, great labor, and of great responsibility"; and the task had to be discharged solely by the Prime Minister. "It is a duty which can be delegated to no one else," he said. "All the correspondence and all the interviews must be conducted by himself, and, without dwelling on the sense of responsibility involved, the perception of fitness requisite, and the severe impartiality necessary in deciding on contending claims, the mere physical effort is not slight." The only Prime Minister, perhaps, who approached the task of making an Administration with a sense of gaiety and irresponsibility was Lord Palmerston. He had the engaging weakness of putting all his square men in the round holes, and the reconstruction of the Ministry which sometimes followed was to him only a fresh source of laughter. "Ah, ha!" he would cry, "what a delightful comedy of errors!" Gladstone, while revelling in the power and authority of the position, was deeply impressed also by its gravity and solemnity. He writes in his diary, January 29, 1886: "At a quarter after midnight in came Sir H. Ponsonby with verbal communication from her Majesty, which I at once accepted." It was the command to form his third Administration—that which came quickly to grief on the question of Home Rule. Next day, Saturday, was spent by Gladstone in consultation with his principal colleagues. After Church on Sunday, from one o'clock till eight, political business engrossed his attention. "At night came a painful and harassing succession of letters," he writes, "and my sleep for once gave way; yet for the soul it was profitable, driving me to the hope that the strength of God might be made

manifest in my weakness." Next morning he went down to Osborne to attend Queen Victoria, had two audiences with her Majesty, an hour and a half in all, and in the evening returned to London. He writes in his diary the following day: "I kissed hands, and am thereby Prime Minister for the third time. But, as I trust, for a brief time only—Slept well. D. G."

Mr. John Morley, summarizing the correspondence which Gladstone received while he was engaged in forming one of his Administrations, writes: "One admirable man with intrepid *naïveté* proposed himself for the Cabinet, but was not admitted; another no less admirable was pressed to enter, but felt that he could be more useful as an independent member, and declined—an honorable transaction, repeated by the same person on more than one occasion later. To one excellent member of his former Cabinet the Prime Minister proposed the Chairmanship of Committees, and it was with some tartness refused. Another equally excellent member of the old Administration he endeavored to plant out in the Viceregal Lodge in Dublin, without the Cabinet, but in vain. To a third he proposed the Indian Viceroyalty, and received an answer that left him "stunned and out of breath."

It is also interesting to study the varied feelings with which politicians have received the offer of office. "Dear Henry," wrote Robert Lowe in a brief, laconic note to his brother in December 1868, "I am Chancellor of the Exchequer with everything to learn. Yours affectionately." It was the surprise appointment of Gladstone's first Administration, for Lowe had previously shown but little interest in finance. His administration of the office soon ended in an abortive attempt to impose a tax on matches. In another letter to a friend Lowe said: "I have this day accepted the office of

Chancellor of the Exchequer in Gladstone's Government. I am almost angry with myself for not being more pleased. One gets these things, but gets them too late. Ten years ago I should have been very differently affected. However, it is something to have done what I said I would do." It was a curious frame of mind in which to enter upon a great office. He had said he would be a Cabinet Minister, and the thing had come to pass. That was all.

That eminent lawyer, John Duke Coleridge, returned home from a concert on the night of December 4, 1868, to find—as he records in his diary—"Gladstone's messenger waiting with an offer of the S.G.; Collier to be A.G." The letter of the Prime Minister was written from "11 Charlton House Terrace," and marked "Most Private." "I need not spend words," said Gladstone, "in assuring you that I anticipate great advantage to the new Government from your most valuable aid, and that I look forward with great pleasure to the relations which will, I hope, be established between us." Coleridge sent the messenger back with a note refusing the post absolutely. He doubted whether he could serve with satisfaction under the Attorney-General, Sir Robert Collier. "I know well," he wrote, "that a man who once puts office by puts it by probably for ever; and you will not suppose that I send this answer without great regret and a considerable struggle. But I am sure it is my duty to do it." Next morning Coleridge received another letter inviting him to come to 11 Carleton House Terrace. "So I had to go to him," Coleridge writes on December 5. "He was most kind, and urged me to accept." Two days later he says: "So the deed is done, and I suppose in a few days I shall be Minister." On Saturday, December 10, he went down to Windsor, "with a lot of Ministers com-

ing in and going out," had luncheon, saw the Queen, and was knighted. "I could not help it," he adds. What chance had his weak human disinclination for office against the working of resistless, inevitable Fate?

At a Press Club dinner in London a few years ago Mr. John Morley related the circumstances in which he received and accepted in 1886 the offer of the post of Chief Secretary for Ireland, with a seat in the Cabinet. "It was whilst I was writing a leading article for a certain periodical," said he, "that I received a letter from an illustrious statesman, who was then forming a Government, offering me a post in his Cabinet." "Gentlemen," he added, amid the cheers and the laughter of the company, "so strong in me was the journalistic instinct that, after accepting the illustrious statesman's offer I went back and finished that leading article. And I can assure you that neither the grammar nor the style of the latter half of the article fell short of my usual standard."

One of the most humanly interesting books dealing with public life in England is *From a Stonemason's Bench to the Treasury Bench*, in which Mr. Henry Broadhurst, M.P., tells the story of his career. In 1886 he was Secretary to the Parliamentary Committee of the Trades Union Congress, and a member of Parliament. One busy day at his office a letter was handed to him by a messenger, and, opening the envelope, he found the following communication:

[Secret.]

21 Carlton House Terrace, S.W.,
February 5, 1886.

Dear Mr. Broadhurst:—I have great pleasure in proposing to you that you should accept office as Under-Secretary of State in the Home Department. Alike on private and on public grounds, I trust it may be agreeable to you to accept this appointment, which should remain strictly secret until your

name shall have been laid before her Majesty.

I remain, with much regard,

Sincerely yours,

W. E. Gladstone.

According to custom, Mr. Broadhurst immediately called upon the Prime Minister. He said that if it were Mr. Gladstone's wish that he should join the Administration, he hoped it would be in some capacity less important than that of Under-Secretary of the Home Office. But the Prime Minister would not listen to any objections to the offer. "I'll answer for you myself," said he, playfully. "You must prepare at once to enter upon the duties of the office." Mr. Broadhurst adds: "I can honestly declare that I left Mr. Gladstone's house without any of those feelings of exhilaration and pleasing excitement which the gift of office is generally supposed to awake in the breast of the politician." He lived the hard struggle of his early years over again in the next half-hour. "The lowly beginning of my career," he says, "its labors at the forge and the stonemason's shop; the privations, the wanderings, and my varying fortunes, stood out in my mind's eye as clearly as so many living pictures. Especially did my memory recall the months I had spent working on the very Government buildings which I was about to enter as a Minister of the Crown." He deplored the loss which the lack of education in his early days involved, and visions of failure and humiliation in the discharge of his new duties, in consequence, tormented him.

It is probably as annoying to an expectant Minister to be offered what he regards as an inferior post as to be entirely ignored. Sir Robert Peel, in December 1834, offered Lord Ashley (subsequently the Earl of Shaftsbury) a seat on the Board of Admiralty, which Lord Ashley, thinking it altogether beneath him, promptly refused. "Had I

not," he writes in his diary, "by God's grace and the study of religion subdued the passion of my youth, I should now have been heart-broken. Canning, eight years ago, offered me, as a neophyte, a seat at one of the Boards, the first step in a young statesman's life. If I am not now worthy of more, it is surely better to cease to be a candidate for public honors. Yet Peel's letter, so full of flummery, would lead anyone to believe that I was a host of excellency. The thing is a contradiction." However, it is interesting to note that he accepted the post subsequently. He was satisfied that it was of more importance than he at first supposed.

No politician had such curious adventures as Shaftsbury as an aspirant to office, and certainly no one has confessed so freely the bitterness of his disappointments. In 1839 Peel was again engaged in making a Government. Queen Victoria had hardly been two years on the throne, and was only twenty years of age. Peel invited Lord Ashley to accept a post in the Royal Household, urging that he desired to have around "this young woman, on whose moral and religious character depends the welfare of millions of human beings," persons whose conversation would tend to her moral improvement. Lord Ashley acknowledges that he was "thunderstruck" when he received Peel's letter, as he had aspired to a far higher position than that, as he says, of "a mere Court puppet." But in his reply he said, somewhat sarcastically, that if Peel desired it he was willing to take "the office of Chief scullion to the Court." However, this Administration was not constituted. It was wrecked on what is known as "the Bedchamber question." As one of the ladies of the Bedchamber, the Mistress of the Robes, who was most closely in attendance upon Queen Victoria, was related to some of the out-

going Whig Ministers, by whom she had been appointed—the office being then, as now, political, and its occupant being bound to go out on a change of Government. Peel insisted upon her resignation. The Queen refused to consent to such a course, as one repugnant to her feelings, and Peel, there-upon refusing to form an Administration, the Melbourne Ministry was recalled to office.

Two years later Peel was engaged once more in making a Government—this time Queen Victoria raised no objection to the Mistress of the Robes being changed—and again he offered Lord Ashley a place in the Royal Household as a man whose morals were above suspicion. Lord Ashley now believed that Peel simply wanted to muzzle him, the leader of the growing humanitarian movement for the State regulation of factories. He refused the office. "I told Peel," he wrote, "the case was altered; the Court was no longer the same; the Queen was two years older, had a child, and a husband to take care of her." He discovered subsequently, to his deep mortification, that Peel had already offered the post of Vice-Chamberlain of the Household to Lord — ("the hero of Madame Grisi," as Ashley describes him); and that Lord — exclaimed, "Thank God, my character is too bad for a Household place!" Lord Ashley argued that "morality, therefore, was not the reason for putting me at Court."

On January 27, 1855, the coalition Government of Lord Aberdeen and Lord John Russell resigned, being defeated on a vote of censure charging them with the mismanagement of the Crimean war. Lord Palmerston received the commands of Queen Victoria to form an Administration. He, too, desired to have a Ministry of both Liberals and Conservatives. On February 7 he wrote to Ashley—now the Earl of Shaftesbury and a Conservative

—offering him the Chancellorship of the Duchy of Lancaster with a seat in the Cabinet. That was in the morning. In the afternoon Shaftesbury received a brief note from Palmerston requesting him to "consider the offer as suspended," in consequence of unforeseen difficulties, which it subsequently transpired were the claims of the Liberals for a greater share of place and power in the new Government. This explanation came to Shaftesbury from Lady Palmerston. "Palmerston is distracted with all the worry he has to go through," she wrote. In a P.S. she added: "It is no pleasure to form a Government when there are so many unreasonable people to please, and so many interested people pressing for their own gratification and vanity, without any regard to the public good or the interests of the Government and country." Shaftesbury thus poured out his virtuously indignant soul on the subject to his son: "The selfishness, the meanness, the love of place and salary, the oblivion of the country, of man's welfare and God's honor, have never been more striking and terrible than in this crisis. These, added to the singular conceit of all the candidates for office (and all have aspired to the highest), have thrown stumbling-blocks in Palmerston's path at every step. The greediness and vanity of our place-hunters have combined to make each one of them a union of the vulture and the peacock."

Shaftesbury declares that he had then no desire for place; and it is impossible to doubt the genuineness of the thanksgiving on his "escape from office" in which he indulges. In March some of the members of the Administration resigned, and Palmerston again offered Shaftesbury the Chancellorship of the Duchy of Lancaster. But Shaftesbury was still reluctant. "I could not satisfy myself," he says, "that to accept office was a Divine call.

I was satisfied that God had called me to labor among the poor." However, one morning he received this note from Lady Palmerston: "Palmerston is very anxious now that you should put on your undress uniform and be at the Palace a quarter before three, to be sworn in. Pray do this, and I am sure you will not repent it." Shaftesbury gave way to these pleading entreaties. The result was certainly curious. "I went and dressed," he writes in his diary, "and then, while I was waiting for the carriage, I went down on my knees and prayed for counsel, wisdom, and understanding. Then there was someone at the door, as I thought to say that the carriage was ready. But instead of that a note, hurriedly written in pencil, was put into my hand. It was from Palmerston—'Don't go to the Palace.' " Many would have groaned in the anguish of their souls over this crowning disappointment. Shaftesbury declares he danced with joy. "It was to my mind," he says, "as distinctly an act of special Providence as when the hand of Abraham was stayed and Isaac escaped."

Henry Cecil Raikes, in July 1886, awaited, with hope and misgiving alternating in his breast, a letter from Lord Salisbury—then engaged in forming his first Administration—inviting him to join the Cabinet. As the list of Ministerial appointments announced in the Press grew towards completion, and nothing was heard from the Prime Minister, the fear grew upon him that he was about to be shelved. But he had staunch friends at the Carlton Club, and they took the unusual course of addressing "a round-robin" to Lord Salisbury, earnestly requesting him not to forget "the long and arduous services to the party" of Henry Cecil Raikes. A day or two later Raikes received the following letter from the Prime Minister:

20 Arlington Street, S.W.,

July 28, 1886.

My Dear Raikes:—Are you disposed to join us as Postmaster-General? I am very anxious to meet your views. I wish I was in a position to do so more fully. But that is a species of regret which clogs me at every step of the arduous task in which I am engaged. I shall be very glad if we are able to persuade you to associate yourself with us—for the present in this office.

Believe me, yours very truly,

Salisbury.

Only the minor post of Postmaster-General, when he had expected the Home Office, which carries a seat in the Cabinet! But to refuse an offer of office because it does not come up to his expectations often means the exclusion of the office-seeker from office for ever. Raikes accordingly decided to take the post of Postmaster-General. "He fully recognized the difficulties of his chief's position," writes his son and biographer, "and, of course, was not blind to the fact that if he were to refuse this office he would probably be throwing away the substance for the shadow, and would cut himself off from any but a remote chance of future advancement." It is not every politician who has had an offer of an office which was less than he expected who can follow the example of Henry Brougham, who contemptuously tore up the letter of Earl Gray offering him the post of Attorney-General in the first Reform Administration. Brougham wanted the Lord Chancellorship, and would not be put off with anything else; and though Grey was reluctant to trust him in so exalted a post, he had his way, for he was in the strong position of being indispensable to the new Government. But Raikes knew that he could be done without, and, sensible man, he accepted what was offered. Naturally he was mortified that the Secretaryship of State for the Home Department was carried off by an entirely outside and unsuspected rival, Mr. Henry

Matthews, who was discovered in the Law Courts by Lord Randolph Churchill.

Is there anything more poignant in the history of the making of Governments than the entreaty addressed by Benjamin Disraeli to Sir Robert Peel, in 1841, that he should not be forgotten in the distribution of the offices in the Tory Administration which was then being formed? Writing from Grosvenor Gate on September 5, 1841, and addressing "Dear Sir Robert," Disraeli said he should not dwell upon his services to the Tory party, though since 1834 he had fought four contests, expended large sums of money, and exerted his intelligence to the utmost for the propagation of Peel's policy. He adds: "But there is one peculiarity in my case on which I cannot be silent. I have had to struggle against a storm of political hate and malice which few men ever experienced from the moment—at the instigation of a member of your Cabinet—I enrolled myself under your banner, and I have only been sustained under these trials by the conviction that the day would come when the foremost man of this country would publicly testify that he had some respect for my ability and my character."

Then, throwing all reserve aside, he ends his letter with the following outburst of genuine feeling: "I confess to be unrecognized at this moment by you appears to me to be overwhelming, and I appeal to your own heart—to that justice and magnanimity which I feel are your characteristics—to save me from an intolerable humiliation."

The same post brought the Prime Minister a most appealing letter signed, "Mary Anne Disraeli," addressed "Dear Sir Robert Peel," and marked "Confidential." She begins: "I beg you not to be angry with me for my intrusion, but I am overwhelmed with anxiety. My husband's political career is for

ever crushed if you do not appreciate him. Mr. Disraeli's exertions are not unknown to you; but there is much he has done that you cannot be aware of, though they have no other aim but to do you honor, no wish for recompense but your approbation."

Her husband had made Peel's opponents his personal enemies, she goes on; he had stood four expensive elections since 1834. "Literature," she concludes, "he has abandoned for politics. Do not destroy all his hopes, and make him feel his life has been a mistake."

Peel's reply was cold and formal. He regarded Disraeli as a political adventurer, and disliked him personally. "My dear Sir," he addresses him, and, fastening on the statement that Disraeli had joined the Tory party at the instigation of a member of Peel's former Cabinet, he declares that no one had ever got from him the slightest authority to make such a communication. Then Peel gives a remarkable account of the difficulties which beset him in constituting the new Government:

"But, quite independently of this consideration, I should have been very happy, had it been in my power, to avail myself of your offer of service; and your letter is one of the many I receive which too forcibly impress upon me how painful and invidious is the duty which I have been compelled to undertake. I am only supported in it by the consciousness that my desire has been to do justice.

"I trust, also, that when candidates for Parliamentary office calmly reflect on my position, and the appointments I have made—when they review the names of those previously connected with me in public life whom I have been absolutely compelled to exclude, the claims founded on acceptance in 1834 with the almost hopeless prospects of that day, the claims, too, founded on new party combinations—I trust they

will then understand how perfectly insufficient are the means at my disposal to meet the wishes that are conveyed to me by men whose co-operation I should be proud to have and whose qualifications and pretensions for office I do not contest."

Disraeli, writing from Grosvenor Gate, September 8, 1841, hastens to explain that he never intended even to suggest, much less to say, that a promise of official promotion had ever been made to him at any time by any member of Peel's Cabinet. "Parliamentary office," he says, "should be the recognition of party services and Parliamentary ability, and as such only was it to me an object of ambition." He ends with a dignified touch of pathos: "If such a pledge had been given me by yourself, and not redeemed, I should have taken refuge in silence. Not to be appreciated may be mortification; to be balked of a promised reward is only a vulgar accident of life, to be borne without a murmur."

Five years passed, and in the debate on the third reading of the Bill for the repeal of the corn duties Disraeli, from the back Ministerial benches, made a scathing attack upon Peel and his betrayal of the Tory party. The Prime Minister, in reply, disclosed to the country the curious incidents of 1841. "It is still more surprising," said he, "that if such were the hon. gentleman's views of my character he should have been ready, as I think he was, to unite his fortunes with mine in office, thereby implying the strongest proof which a public man can give of confidence in the honor and integrity of a Minister of the Crown." Disraeli rose at once to make a personal explanation. He denied that his opposition to the Free Trade policy of the Prime Minister was inspired by his disappointment of office. He was not an applicant for office in 1841. "I never shall—it is totally foreign to my nature

—make an application for any place," he cried. "Whatever occurred in 1841 between the right hon. gentleman and myself," said he, "was entirely attributable to the intervention of another gentleman, whom I supposed to be in the confidence of the right hon. baronet, and I daresay it may have arisen from a misconception."

Gladstone agreed with Sir Robert Peel that it was inadvisable to put a man into the Cabinet without a previous official training. It was also his custom, once he had invited a man to office, to hold on to him to the last possible moment. "The next most serious thing to admitting a man into the Cabinet," said he, mentioning one of the principles which guided him in the making of a Government, "is to leave a man out who has once been in." Still, there were occasions when he was compelled to pass over an old comrade-in-arms on the ground of age. He was himself seventy-one years old when, in 1880, he was called upon to form his second Government. To one old member of his former Administration he wrote: "I do not feel able to ask you to resume the toils of office." He admitted that he himself was "the oldest man of his political generation," and that, therefore, he should be a solecism in the Government which he was engaged in constructing. "I have been brought," he added, "by the seeming force of exceptional circumstances to undertake a task requiring less of years and more of vigor than my accumulating store of the one and waning residue of the other." Here we have the answer to the question of age and office.

The exclusion of a veteran politician from office is not a matter of the number of years he has counted. Is he an extinct political volcano as well as an old man? May he safely be shelved? On the answer which the Prime Minister gives to these questions in his

own mind depends the fate of the office-seeker of advanced years. Gladstone was eighty-four in 1893, but he was still inevitable as Prime Minister. If the strong young man of achievement, and still greater promise, cannot be set aside, neither can the old man who, having built up a commanding reputation, takes care that it does not decline.

Happy country that has so many able and honest, wealthy men, eagerly desirous to toil in its service! It is a singular thing that, among the thousand or twelve hundred men who constitute the two Houses of Parliament, there has never been any reluctance to take office. Probably the only instance of a public man who showed a positive repugnance of office was Lord Althorp, who was Chancellor of the Exchequer and leader of the House of Commons in the Grey and Melbourne Administrations from November 1830 to December 1834. Office destroyed all his happiness, he declared, and affected his mind to such an extent that he had to remove his pistols from his bedroom lest he should be tempted to shoot himself. He remained in office because he felt that the responsibility was inevitable to one in his rank and position, born, as it were, to the purple, a member of one of the great territorial families, who boast of long lines of ancestors in the public service, establishing a prescriptive title to office, which he felt he could no more set aside than the earldom and broad acres of which he was also the heir. The one consolation he derived from the death of his brother, Earl Spencer, was that his succession to the House of Lords compelled him to lay down the burden of Chancellor of the Exchequer. Sir George Cornewall Lewis seems to have been animated by somewhat the same exaggerated high sense of duty. When Palmerston offered him the post of Chancellor of the Exchequer which

Gladstone vacated in 1855, he says he entertained the strongest disinclination to accept the office. "I felt, however," he writes, "that in the peculiar position of the Government"—they were in difficulties over the Crimean war—"refusal was scarcely honorable, and would be attributable to cowardice, and I therefore, most reluctantly, made up my mind to accept it."

But these cases of objection to office on the part of public men, however wealthy or however old, are exceedingly rare. The hunt for the seals of office when a new Government is being formed after a dissolution is eager and untiring. The old men, who will not admit that their weight of years unfits them for the cares and responsibilities of office, haunt the political clubs and Downing Street, their one object being to keep themselves conspicuous in the eyes of the new Prime Minister. But they cannot all get portfolios. Some of them must be sacrificed; there are so many pushful and inevitable young men to be considered. The same cry is heard in politics as in other walks of life: "Why should these old fellows lag superfluous on the stage?" But the old men will not retire voluntarily and gracefully from public life. It is not alone that they instinctively revolt against the unpleasant assumption that their capacity for work is at an end, but they dislike any change of habits and pursuits, and, above all, they desire for a little longer to play a part on the prominent stage of Parliament. Public life, therefore, retires from them. Their party services in the past are forgotten. It is only the few who have made a great reputation and acquired a great authority that cannot lightly be set aside. For most politicians, no matter how well they may have worked for their party for years, the time inevitably comes when they are called "old fogeys," and, while still anxious to serve their country as Ministers of

the Crown, they experience the bitterness of the disappointment, the vexation, the humiliation of being shunted for ever. It is idle to talk of acquiescing patiently in the inevitable. Political history affords many a sad instance of such treatment being regarded by old publicists as one of the sorest of the many injustices of life.

The Administration being at last formed, a day is fixed by the King for the reception of the outgoing and incoming Ministers. On the morning of the day the Clerk to the Privy Council collects all the seals from the different offices and takes them down to Windsor Castle. The outgoing Ministers go down later in the day. Each Minister then takes his seal, and in the Council Chamber, where the King sits enthroned, surrenders it into the hands of the Sovereign. An hour later the new Ministers arrive at the Castle. Each in turn kneels before his Majesty and receives the seal of his office. Thus does the Sovereign ratify the selections of the Prime Minister for the various posts in the Administration.

Lord Campbell relates in his diary that in 1859, as the members of the Palmerston Administration, in which he held the office of Lord Chancellor, were going down to Windsor by special train, they passed another express returning to London with the outgoing Premier, Lord Derby, and his colleagues. What an opening for aspiring young statesmen if a wicked wag of a railway director had ordered the two trains to be put on the same line, was the genial comment of the Lord Chancellor! Sir Stafford Northcote, who was a Minister in the next Derby Administration, formed in July 1866, also gives some interesting glimpses of the proceedings at Windsor Castle on the occasion of a change of Government. He writes: "Queen's carriages met us at the terminus and took us to the Castle. As we went upstairs we met the late

Ministers coming down, and shook hands with them. While we were waiting in the long room there was a sharp thunderstorm, and there was another while we were at luncheon, after taking office. The slopes of the Terrace looked as if there had been a fall of snow. Some thought this a bad omen for us. Disraeli had a bad omen of his own as we came down, for, thinking there was a seat at the end of the saloon carriage, he sat down there, and found himself unexpectedly on the floor."

This Administration lasted scarcely two years; but, despite the ill-omened accident to Disraeli, it was for that statesman a fortunate Administration. In it he first filled the great office of Prime Minister, to which he succeeded on the resignation of Lord Derby, on account of failing health, early in 1868.

But to return to Windsor Castle. Sir Stafford Northcote goes on to say: "Lord Derby was first sent for by the Queen, and had a short audience. We were then all taken along the corridor to the door of a small room, or, rather, closet. Lord Derby, Lord Chelmsford, and Walpole were called in; then the five new members of the Privy Council—Duke of Buckingham, Carnarvon, Cranborne, Hardy, and I—were called in together, and knelt before the Queen while we took the oath of allegiance; then we kissed hands, rose, and took the Privy Councillor's oath standing. The Queen then named the Duke of Buckingham Lord President of the Council, and we all retired. The Prince of Wales and Duke of Edinburgh were in the room. We were then called in one by one, and kissed hands on appointment to office, Lord Derby going first, then the Lord Chancellor, the Lord President, the Lord Privy Seal, the Secretaries of State (all together), the Chancellor of the Exchequer, &c. The seals were delivered to all these, except the Lord

President. Lord Derby then had a long audience with the Queen, while we went to luncheon. Returned by special train at four o'clock."

Finally, Sir Stafford Northcote makes this comment on the ceremony: "The swearing-in was much less impressive than it is said to have been formerly. After being sworn we shook hands with each Privy Councillor present. This, in a large room, with a full Council, was no doubt a more solemn undertaking than in a Council of only three members, huddled up in a tiny room, with the rest outside the door. The Queen seemed very cheerful, but said nothing, except as to one or two details of arrangement."

But all is not over yet. A member of the House of Commons must resign his seat and seek re-election on accepting an office of profit under the Crown. The only post to which this law does not apply is the Secretaryship to the Treasury. The object of compelling a representative to submit his acceptance of office to the judgment of his constituents, which was first established by an Act of the reign of Queen Anne, was to restrain the corrupt influence of the Crown over Parliament by its power of conferring place on servile and obsequious members. The danger the statute was designed to avert is now, happily, past and gone for ever. The Sovereign is still, theoretically, "the source of justice and of mercy, of all offices, honors, emoluments, and chartered rights," and as such is supposed to select the members of the Administration. But, of course, the appointments are made solely by the Prime Minister, and the sanction of the Crown is more or less a formality. The Act of Anne, however, continues in operation despite the fact that, owing to the complete revolution which has since been effected in our political life, it is entirely remote from the realities of the present time. The only

modification of the original Act is a provision in the Reform Act of 1832, by which a Minister who is transferred to another office "in lieu of and in immediate succession the one to the other" need not submit himself to his constituents. A constitutional difficulty arose on the taking over of the Chancellorship of the Exchequer by Gladstone on the resignation of Lowe in 1873, Gladstone at the time being First Lord of the Treasury and Prime Minister. Did the right hon. gentleman come under the provision of the Act of 1832, being therefore not obliged to seek re-election? The law officers of the Crown—Coleridge, Attorney-General, and Jessel, Solicitor-General—came to the conclusion that the seat was not vacated; and their opinion was supported by Sir Erskine May, Clerk of the House of Commons. On the other hand, Lord Chancellor Selborne advanced the opposite view, holding that, as Gladstone had taken the office of Chancellor of the Exchequer, not in lieu of and in immediate succession to, but in addition to, the office of First Lord of the Treasury, he must submit himself to his constituents. But this Gladstone was reluctant to do, as his seat for Greenwich was believed to be unsafe. In the midst of the controversy Parliament was dissolved, and with it the difficulty.

Several attempts have been made to repeal the statute of Queen Anne. Mr. Balfour, who thinks the law is not only antiquated, but inimical to good government, once brought in a Bill to abolish Ministerial re-elections, but failed to get it passed. "I remember in my early days," said he, in the Session of 1905, "the party to which I belong—it was in 1880—derived infinite enjoyment from the satisfaction of turning the late Sir William Harcourt out of his seat at Oxford on his taking office as Home Secretary. He found a seat after considerable inconvenience

to Mr. Gladstone's Government; and in my opinion, although it gave us great satisfaction as a good practical joke, it was a severe condemnation of the system on which we now carry on business, and which no practical assembly in the world but our own would tolerate for an instant."

With the re-election of the Ministers the work is completed. The Administration has been duly constituted, according to long-established custom. However smoothly and rapidly it may have progressed, there are certain to

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be many sore hearts—the disappointed hopes of the young, and, more pathetic still, of the old who are deemed to be no longer fit for office. But what of the outgoing Ministers? How do they take their dismissal by the country? "There are two supreme political pleasures in life," says Lord Rosebery. "One is ideal, the other real. The ideal is when a man receives the seals of office from the hands of his Sovereign; the real, when he hands them back."

Michael MacDonagh.

PETER'S MOTHER.

BY MRS. HENRY DE LA PASTURE.

CHAPTER XIV.

Peter stood on his own front door steps, on the shady side of the house, in the fresh air of the early morning. The unnecessary eyeglass twinkled on his breast as he looked forth upon the goodliness and beauty of his inheritance. The ever-encroaching green of summer had not yet overpowered the white wealth of flowering spring; for the season was a late one, and the month of June still young.

The apple trees were yet in blossom, and the snowy orchards were scattered over the hillsides between patches of golden gorse. The lilacs, white and purple, were in flower, amid scarlet rhododendrons and branching pink and yellow tree-azaleas. The weeping barberry showered gold dust upon the road.

On the lower side of the drive, the rolling grass slopes were thriftily left for hay; a flowering mass of daisies, and buttercups, and red clover, and blue speedwell.

A long way off, but still clearly visible in the valley below, glistened the stone-tiled roof of the old square-tow-

ered church, guarded by its sentinel yews.

A great horse-chestnut stood like a giant bouquet of waxen bloom beside a granite monument, which threw a long shadow over the green turf mounds towards the west, and marked the grave of Sir Timothy Crewys.

Peter saw that monument more plainly just now than all the rest of his surroundings, although he was short-sighted and although his eyes were further dimmed by sudden tears.

His memories of his father were not particularly tender ones, and his grief was only natural filial sentiment in its vaguest and lightest form. But such as it was—the slight of the empty study, which was to be his own room in future; the strange granite monument shining in the sun; the rush of home associations which the familiar landscape aroused—augmented it for the time being, and made the young man glad of a moment's solitude.

There was the drooping ash—which had made such a cool, refreshing tent in summer—where he had learnt his

first lessons at his mother's knee, and where he had kept his rabbit-hutch for a season, until his father had found it out, and despatched it to the stable-yard.

His punishments and the troubles of his childhood had always been associated with his father, and its pleasures and indulgences with his mother; but neither had made any very strong impression on Peter's mind, and it was of his father that he thought with most sympathy, and even most affection. Partly, doubtless, because Sir Timothy was dead, and because Peter's memories were not vivid ones, any more than his imagination was vivid; but also because his mind was preoccupied with a vague resentment against his mother.

He could not understand the change which was, nevertheless, so evident. Her new-born brightness and ease of manner, and her strangely increased loveliness, which had been yet more apparent on the previous evening, when she was dressed for dinner, than on his first arrival.

It was absurd, Peter thought, in all the arrogance of disdainful youth, that a woman of her age should have learnt to care for her appearance thus; or to wear becoming gowns, and arrange her hair like a fashion plate.

If it had been Sarah he could have understood.

At the thought of Sarah the color suddenly flushed across his thin, tanned face, and he moved uneasily.

Sarah, too, was changed; but not even Peter could regret the change in Sarah.

The loveliness of his mother, refined and white and delicate as she was, did not appeal to him; but Sarah, in her radiant youth, with her brilliant coloring—fresh as a May morning, buxom as a dairymaid, scornful as a princess—had struck Sir Peter dumb with admiration, though he had hitherto de-

spised young women. It almost enraged him to remember that this stately beauty had ever been an impudent little schoolgirl, with a turned-up nose and a red pigtail. In days gone by, Miss Sarah had actually fought and scratched the spoilt boy, who tried to tyrannize over his playmate as he tyrannized over his mother and his aunts. On the other hand, the recollection of those early days also became precious to Peter for the first time.

Sarah!

It was difficult to be sentimental on the subject, but difficulties are easily surmounted by a lover; and though Sarah's childhood afforded few facilities for ecstatic reverie, still—there had been moments, and especially towards the end of the holidays, when he and Sarah had walked on the banks of the river, with arms round each other's necks, sharing each other's toffee and confidences.

Poor Sarah had been first despatched to a boarding school as unmanageable, at the age of seven, and thereafter her life had been a changeful one, since her father could not live without her, and her mother would not keep her at home. She had always presented a lively contrast to her elder brothers, who were all that a parent's heart could desire, and too old to be much interested in their little rebellious sister.

Her high spirits survived disgrace and punishment and periodical banishment. Though not destitute of womanly qualities, she was more remarkable for hoydenish ones; and her tastes were peculiar and varied. If there were a pony to break in, a sick child to be nursed, a groom to scold, a pig to be killed—there was Sarah; but if a frock to try on, a visit to be paid, a note to be written—where was she?

Peter, recalling these things, tried to laugh at himself for his extraordinary

infatuation of the previous day; but he knew very well in his heart that he could not really laugh, and that he had lain awake half the night thinking of her.

Sarah had spent the rest of the day at Barracombe after Peter's return, and had been escorted home late in the evening. Could he ever forget those moments on the terrace, when she had paced up and down beside him, in the pleasant summer darkness; her white neck and arms gleaming through transparent black tulle; sometimes listening to the sounds of music and revelry in the village below, and looking at the rockets that were being let off on the river-banks; and sometimes asking him of the war, in that low voice which thrilled Peter as it had already thrilled not a few interested hearers before him?

Those moments had been all too few, because John Crewys also had monopolized a share of Miss Sarah's attention. Peter did not dislike his guardian, whose composed courtesy and absolute freedom from self-consciousness, or any form of affectation, made it difficult indeed not to like him. His remarks made Peter smile in spite of himself, though he could not keep the ball of conversation rolling like Miss Sarah, who was not at all afraid of the great counsel, but matched his pleasant wit with a most engaging impudence all her own.

Lady Mary had stood clasping her son's arm, full of thankfulness for his safe return; but she, too, had been unable to help laughing at John, who purposely exerted himself to amuse her to keep her from dwelling upon their parting on the morrow.

Her thoughtful son insisted that she must avoid exposure to the night air, and poor Lady Mary had somewhat ruefully returned to the society of the old ladies within; but John Crewys

did not, as he might, and as Peter had supposed he would, join the other old folk. Peter classed his mother and aunts together, quite calmly, in his thoughts. He listened to Sarah's light talk with John, watching her like a man in a dream, hardly able to speak himself; and it is needless to say that he found her chatter far more interesting and amusing than anything John could say.

Who could have dreamt that little Sarah would grow up into this bewitching maiden? There was a girl coming home on board ship, the young wife of an officer, whom every one had raved about and called so beautiful. Peter almost laughed aloud as he contrasted Sarah with his recollections of this lady.

How easy it was to talk to Sarah! How much easier than to his mother; whom, nevertheless, he loved so dearly, though always with that faint dash of disapproval which somehow embittered his love.

He could not shake off the impression of her first appearance, coming singing down the oak staircase, in her white gown. *His mother!* Dressed almost like a girl, and, worst of all, looking almost like a girl, so slight and white and delicate. Peter recollected that Sir Timothy had been very particular about his wife's apparel. He liked it to be costly and dignified, and she had worn stiff silks and poplins inappropriate to the country, but considered eminently suited to her position by the Brawnton dressmaker. And her hair had been parted on her forehead, and smoothed over her little ears. Sir Timothy did not approve of curling-irons and frippery.

Peter did not know that his mother had cried over her own appearance often, before she became indifferent; and if he had known, he would have thought it only typical of the weakness and frivolity which he had heard

attributed to Lady Mary from his earliest childhood.

His aunts were not intentionally disloyal to their sister-in-law; but their disapproval of her was too strong to be hidden, and they regarded a little boy as blind and deaf to all that did not directly concern his lessons or his play. Thus Peter had grown up loving his mother, but disapproving of her, and the disapproval was sometimes more apparent than the love.

After breakfast the new squire took an early walk with his guardian, and inspected a few of the changes which had taken place in the administration of his tiny kingdom. Though Peter was young and inexperienced, he could not be blind to the immense improvements made.

He had left a house and stables shabby and tumbledown and out of repair; rotting woodwork, worn-off paint, and missing tiles had been painfully evident. Broken fences and hingeless gates were the rule, and not the exception, in the grounds.

Now all deficiencies had been made good by a cunning hand that had allowed no glaring newness to be visible; a hand that had matched old tiles, and patched old walls, and planted creepers, and restored an almost magical order and comfort to Peter's beautiful old house.

Where Sir Timothy's grumbling tenants had walked to the nearest brook for water, they now found pipes brought to their own cottage doors. The home-farm, stables, yards, and cowsheds were drained and paved; fallen outbuildings replaced, uneven roads gravelled and rolled; dead trees removed, and young ones planted, shrubberies trimmed, and views long obscured once more opened out.

Peter did not need the assurances of Mr. Crawley to be aware that his inheritance would be handed back to him improved a thousand-fold.

He was astounded to find how easily John had arranged matters over which his father had grumbled and hesitated for years. Even the dispute with the Crown had been settled by Mr. Crawley without difficulty, now that Sir Timothy's obstinacy no longer stood in the way of a reasonable compromise.

John Crewys had faithfully carried out the instructions of the will; and there were many thousands yet left of the sum placed at his disposal for the improvements of the estate; a surplus which would presently be invested for Peter's benefit, and added to that carefully tied-up capital over which Sir Timothy had given his heir no discretionary powers.

Peter spent a couple of hours walking about with John, and took an intelligent interest in all that had been done, from the roof and chimney-pots of the house, to the new cider-mill and stable fittings; but though he was civil and amiable, he expressed no particular gratitude nor admiration on his return to the hall, where his mother eagerly awaited him.

It consoled her to perceive that he was on excellent terms with his guardian, offering to accompany him in the dog-cart to Brawnton, whither John was bound, to catch the noon express to town.

"You will have him all to yourself after this," said John Crewys, smiling down upon Lady Mary during his brief farewell interview, which took place in the oriel window of the banqueting-hall, within sight, though not within hearing, of the two old sisters. "I am sorry to take him off to Brawnton, but I could hardly refuse his company."

"No, no; I am only glad you should take every opportunity of knowing him better," she said.

"And you will be happier without any divided feelings at stake," he said. "Give yourself up entirely to Peter for the next three or four months, with-

out any remorse concerning me. For the present, at least, I shall be hard at work, with little enough time to spare for sentiment." There was a tender raillery in his tone, which she understood. "When I come back we will face the situation, according to circumstances. By-the-by, I suppose it is not to be thought of that Miss Sarah should prolong her Whitsuntide holidays much further?"

"She ought to have returned to town earlier, but Mrs. Hewel was ill," said Lady Mary. "She is a tiresome woman. She moved heaven and earth to get rid of poor Sarah, and, now the child has had a *succès*, she is always clamoring for her to come back."

"Ah!" said John, thoughtfully, "and you will moot to Peter the scheme for taking a house in town? But I should advise you to be guided by his wishes over that. Still, it would be very delightful to meet during our time of waiting; and that would be the only way. I won't come down here again until I can declare myself. It is a—false position, under the circumstances."

"I know; I understand," said Lady Mary; "but I am afraid Peter won't want to stir from home. He is so glad to be back, poor boy, one can hardly blame him; and he shares his father's prejudices against London."

"Does he, indeed?" said John, rather dryly. "Well, make the most of your summer with him. You will get only too much London—in the near future."

"Perhaps," Lady Mary said, smiling.

But, in spite of herself, John's confidence communicated itself to her.

When Peter and John had departed, Lady Mary went and sat alone in the quiet of the fountain garden, at the eastern end of the terrace. The thick hedges and laurels which sheltered it had been duly thinned and trimmed, to allow the entrance of the morning sunshine. Roses and lilies bloomed

brightly round the fountain now, but it was still rather a lonely and deserted spot, and silent, save for the sighing of the wind, and the tinkle of the dropping water in the stone basin.

A young copper beech, freed from its rankly increasing enemies of branching laurel and encroaching bramble, now spread its glory of transparent ruddy leaf in the sunshine above trim hedges, here and there diversified by the pale gold of a laburnum, or the violet clusters of a rhododendron in full flower. Rare ferns fringed the edges of the little fountain, where diminutive reptiles whisked in and out of watery homes, or sat motionless on the brink, with fixed, glassy eyes.

Lady Mary had come often to this quiet corner for rest and peace and solitude in days gone by. She came often still, because she had a fancy that the change in her favorite garden was typical of the change in her life. The letting-in of the sunshine, where before there had been only deepest shade; the pinks and forget-me-nots which were gaily blowing, where only moss and fungi had flourished; the blooming of the roses, where the undergrowth had crossed and recrossed withered branches above bare, black soil.

She brought her happiness here, where she had brought her sorrow and her repinings long ago.

A happiness subdued by many memories, chastened by long anxiety, obscured by many doubts, but still happiness.

There was to be no more of that heart-breaking anxiety. Her boy had been spared to come home to her; and John—John, who always understood, had declared that, for the present, at least, Peter must come first.

The whole beautiful summer lay before her, in which she was to be free to devote herself to her wounded hero. She must set herself to charm away

that shadow of discontent—of disapproval—that darkened Peter's gray eyes when they rested upon her; a shadow of which she had been only too conscious even before he went to South Africa.

She made a thousand excuses for him, after telling herself that he needed none.

Poor boy! he had been brought up in such narrow ways, such an atmosphere of petty distrust and fault-finding and small aims. Even his bold venture into the world of men had not enabled him to shake off altogether the influence of his early training, though it had changed him so much for the better; it had not altogether cured Peter of his old ungraciousness, partly inherited, and partly due to example.

But he had returned full of love and tenderness and penitence, though his softening had been but momentary; and when she had brought him under the changed influences which now dominated her own life, she could not not doubt that Peter's nature would expand.

He should see that home life need not necessarily be gloomy; that all innocent pleasures and interests were to be encouraged, and not repressed. If he wanted to spend the summer at home—and after his long absence what could be more natural?—she would exert herself to make that home as attractive as possible. Why should they not entertain? John had said there was plenty of money. Peter should have other young people about him. She remembered a scene, long ago, when he had brought a boy of his own age in to lunch without permission. She would have to let Peter understand how welcome she should make his friends; he must have many more friends now. While she was yet *châtelaine* of Barracombe, it would be delightful to imbue him with some idea of the duties and pleasures of hos-

pitality. Lady Mary's eyes sparkled at the thought of providing entertainment for many young soldiers, wounded or otherwise. They should have the best of everything. She was rich, and Peter was rich, and there was no harm in making visitors welcome in that great house, and filling the rooms that had been silent and empty so long, with the noise and laughter of young people.

She would ask Peter about the horses to-morrow. John had purposely refrained from filling the stables which had been so carefully restored and fitted. There were very few horses. Only the cob for the dog-cart, and a pair for the carriage, so old that the coachman declared it was tempting Providence to sit behind them. They were calculated to have attained their twentieth year, and were driven at a slow jog-trot for a couple of hours every day, except Sundays, in the barouche. James Coachman informed Lady Belstone and Miss Crewys that either steed was liable to drop down dead at any moment, and that they could not expect the best of horses to last for ever; but the old ladies would neither shorten nor abandon their afternoon drive, nor consent to the purchase of a new pair. They continued to behave as though horses were immortal.

Sir Timothy's old black mare was turned out to graze, partly from sentiment, and partly because she, too, was unfitted for any practical purposes; and Peter had outgrown his pony before he went away, though he had ridden it to hounds many times, unknown to his father. Lady Mary thought it would be a pleasure to see her boy well mounted and the stables filled. John had said that the loss of his arm would certainly not prevent Peter from riding. She found herself constantly referring to John, even in her plans for Peter's amusement.

Strong, calm, patient John—who was prepared to wait; and who would not, as he said, snatch happiness at the expense of other people's feelings. How wise he had been to agree that, for the present, she must devote herself only to Peter! She and Peter would be all in all to each other as Peter himself had suggested, and as she had once dreamed her son would be to his mother; though, of course, it was not to be expected that a boy could understand everything, like John.

She must make great allowances; she must be patient of his inherited prejudices; above all, she must make him happy.

Afterwards, perhaps, when Peter had learned to do without her—as he would learn too surely in the course of nature—she would be free to turn to John, and put her hand in his, and let him lead her whithersoever he would.

Peter saw his guardian off at Brawnton, dutifully standing at attention on the platform until the train had departed, instead of starting home as John suggested.

When he came out of the station he stood still for a moment, contemplating the stout, brown cob and the slim groom, who was waiting anxiously to know whether Sir Peter would take the reins, or whether he was to have the honor of driving his master home.

"I think I'll walk back, George," said Peter, with a nonchalant air. "Take the cob along quietly, and let her ladyship know directly you get in that I'm returning by Hewelscourt woods, and the ferry."

"Very good, Sir Peter," said the youth, zealously.

"It would be only civil to look in on the Hewels, as Sarah is going back to town so soon," said Peter to himself. "And it's not driving all those miles on the sunny side of the river, when it's barely three miles from here

to Hewelscourt and the ferry, and in the shade all the way. I shall be back almost as soon as the cart."

A little old lady, dressed in shabby black silk, looked up from the corner of the sofa next the window, when Peter entered the drawing-room at Hewelscourt, after the usual delay, apologies, and barking of dogs which attends the morning caller at the front door of the average country house.

Peter, who had expected to see Mrs. Hewel and Sarah, repented himself for a moment that he had come at all when he beheld this stranger, who regarded him with a pair of dark eyes that seemed several times too large for her small, wrinkled face, and who merely nodded her head in response to his awkward salutation.

"Ah!" said the old lady, rather as though she were talking to herself, "so this is the returned hero, no doubt. How do you do? The rejoicing over your home-coming kept me awake half the night."

Peter was rather offended at this free-and-easy method of address. It seemed to him that, since the old lady evidently knew who he was, she might be a little more respectful in her manner.

"The festivities were all over soon after eleven," he said stiffly. "But perhaps you are accustomed to early hours?"

"Perhaps I am," said the old lady; she seemed more amused than abashed by Peter's dignity of demeanor. "At any rate, I like my beauty sleep to be undisturbed; more especially in the country, where there are so many noises to wake one up from four o'clock in the morning onwards."

"I have always understood," said Peter, who inherited his father's respect for platitudes, "that the country was much quieter than the town. I suppose you live in a town?"

"I suppose I do," said the old lady.

Peter put up his eyeglass indignantly, to quell this disrespectful old woman with a frigid look, modelled upon the expression of his board-ship hero.

The door opened suddenly.

He dropped his eyeglass with a start. But it was only Mrs. Hewel who entered, and not Sarah, after all.

Her *embonpoint*, and consequently her breathlessness, had much increased since Peter saw her last.

"Oh, Peter," she cried, "this is nice of you to come over and see us so soon. We were wondering if you would. Dear, dear, how thankful your mother must be! I know what I was with the boys—and decorated and all—though poor Tom and Willie got nothing; but, as the papers said, it wasn't always those who deserved it most—still, I'm glad *you* got something, anyway; it's little enough, I'm sure, to make up for—" Then she turned nervously to the old lady. "Aunt Elizabeth, this is Sir Peter Crewys, who came home last night."

"I have already made acquaintance with Sir Peter, since you left me to entertain him," said the old lady, nodding affably.

"Lady Tintern arrived unexpectedly by the afternoon train yesterday," explained Mrs. Hewel, in her flustered manner, turning once more to Peter. "She has only been here twice before. It was such a surprise to Sarah to find her here when she came back."

Peter grew very red. Who could have supposed that this shabby old person, whom he had endeavored to snub, was the great Lady Tintern?

"She *didn't* find me," said the old lady. "I was in bed long before Sarah came back. I presume this young gentleman escorted her home?"

"I always send a servant across for Sarah whenever she stays at all late at Barracombe, and always have," said

Mrs. Hewel, in hurried self-defence. "You must remember we are old friends; there never was any formality about her visits to Barracombe."

"My guardian and I walked down to the ferry, and saw her across the river, of course," said Peter, rather sulkily.

"But her maid was with her," cried Mrs. Hewel.

"Of course," Peter said again, in tones that were none too civil.

After all, who was Lady Tintern that she should call him to task? And as if there could be any reason why her oldest playmate should not see Sarah home if he chose.

At the very bottom of Peter's heart lurked an inborn conviction that his father's son was a very much more important personage than any Hewel, or relative of Hewel, could possibly be.

"That was very kind of you and your guardian," said the old lady, suddenly becoming gracious. "Emily, I will leave you to talk to your *old friend*. I dare say I shall see him again at luncheon?"

"I cannot stay to luncheon. My mother is expecting me," said Peter.

He would not express any thanks. What business had the presuming old woman to invite him to luncheon? It was not her house, after-all.

"Oh, your mother is expecting you," said Lady Tintern, whose slightly derisive manner of repeating Peter's words embarrassed and annoyed the young gentleman exceedingly. "I am glad you are such a dutiful son, Sir Peter."

She gathered together her letters and her black draperies, and tottered off to the door, which Peter, who was sadly negligent of *les petits soins*, forgot to open for her; nor did he observe the indignant look she favored him with in consequence.

Sarah came into the drawing-room at last; fresh as the morning dew, in her

summer muslin and fluttering, embroidered ribbons; with a bunch of forget-me-nots, blue as her eyes, nestling beneath her round, white chin.

Her bright hair was curled round her pretty ears and about her fair throat, but Peter did not compare this *coiffure* to a fashion-plate, though, indeed, it exactly resembled one. Neither did he cast the severely critical glance upon Sarah's *toilette* that he had bestowed upon the soft, gray gown, and the cluster of white moss-rosebuds which poor Lady Mary had ventured to wear that morning.

"How have you managed to offend Aunt Elizabeth, Peter?" cried Sarah, with her usual frankness. "She is in the worst of humors."

"Sarah!" said her mother, reprovingly.

"Well, but she *is*," said Sarah. "She called him a cub and a bear, and all sorts of things."

She looked at Peter and laughed, and he laughed back. The cloud of sullenness had lifted from his brow as she appeared.

Mrs. Hewel overwhelmed him with unnecessary apologies. She could not grasp the fact that her polite conversation was as dull and unmeaning to the young man, as Sarah's indiscreet nothings were interesting and delightful.

"I'm sure I don't mind," said Peter; and his tone was quite alert and cheerful. "She told me the country kept her awake. If she doesn't like it, why does she come?"

"She has come to fetch me away," said Sarah. "And she came unexpectedly, because she wanted to see for herself whether mamma was really ill, or whether she was only shamming."

"Sarah!"

"And she has decided she is only shamming," said Sarah. "Unluckily, mamma happened to be down in the

stables, doctoring Venus. You remember Venus, her pet spaniel?"

"Of course."

"Nothing else would have taken me off my sofa, where I ought to be lying at this moment, as you know very well, Sarah," cried Mrs. Hewel, showing an inclination to shed tears.

"To be sure you ought," said Sarah; "but what is the use of telling Aunt Elizabeth that, when she saw you with her own eyes racing up and down the stable-yard, with a piece of raw meat in your hand, and Venus galloping after you?"

"The vet said that if she took no exercise she would die," said Mrs. Hewel, tearfully, "and neither he nor Jones could get her to move. Not even Ash, though he has known her all her life. I know it was very bad for me; but what could I do?"

"I wish I had been there," said Sarah, giggling; "but, however, Aunt Elizabeth described it all to me so graphically this morning that it is almost as good as though I had been."

"She should not have come down like that, without giving us a notion," said Mrs. Hewel, resentfully.

"If she had only warned us, you could have been lying on a sofa, with the blinds down, and I could have been holding your hand and shaking a medicine-bottle," said Sarah. "That is how she expected to find us, she said, from your letters."

"I am sure I scarcely refer to my weak health in my letters," said Mrs. Hewel, plaintively, "and it is natural I should like my only daughter to be with me now and then. Aunt Elizabeth has never had a child herself, and cannot understand the feelings of a mother."

Sarah and Peter exchanged a fleeting glance. She shrugged her shoulders slightly, and Peter looked at his boots. They understood each other perfectly.

Freshly to the recollection of both

rose the lamentations of a little red-haired girl, banished from the Eden of her beloved home, and condemned to a cheap German school. Mrs. Hewel, in her palmiest days, had never found it necessary to race up and down the stable-yard to amuse Sarah; and when her only daughter developed scarlatina, she had removed herself and her spaniels from home for months to escape infection.

"Here is papa," said Sarah, breaking the silence. "He was so vexed to be out when you arrived yesterday. He heard nothing of it till he came back."

Colonel Hewel walked in through the open window, with his dog at his heels. He was delighted to welcome his young neighbor home. A short, sturdy man, with red whiskers, plentiful stiff hair, and bright, dark blue eyes. From her father Sarah had inherited her coloring, her short nose, and her unfailing good spirits.

"I would have come over to welcome you," he said, shaking Peter's hand cordially, "only when I came home there was all the upset of Lady Tintern's arrival, and half a hundred things to be done to make her sufficiently comfortable. And then I would have come to fetch Sarah after dinner, only I couldn't be sure she mightn't have started; and if I'd gone down by the road, ten to one she'd have come up by the path through the woods. So I just sat down and smoked my pipe, and waited for her to come back. You'll stay to lunch, eh, Peter?"

"I must get back to my mother, sir," said Peter. His respect for Sarah's father, who had once commanded a cavalry regiment, had increased a thousand-fold since he last saw Colonel Hewel. "But won't you—I mean she'd be very glad—I wish you'd come over and dine to-night, all of you—as you could not come yesterday evening?"

Thus Peter delivered his first invitation, blushing with eagerness.

"I'm afraid we couldn't leave Lady Tintern—or persuade her to come with us," said the colonel, shaking his head. Then he brightened up. "But as soon as she and Sally have toddled back to town, I see no reason why we shouldn't come, eh, Emily?" he said, turning to his wife.

Peter looked rather blank, and a laugh trembled on Sarah's pretty lips.

"You know I'm not strong enough to dine out, Tom," said his wife, peevishly. "I can't drive so far, and I'm terrified of the ferry at night, with those slippery banks."

"Well, well, there's plenty of time before us. Later on you may get better; and I don't suppose you'll be running away again in a hurry, eh, Peter?" said the colonel. "I'm told you made a capital speech yesterday about sticking to your home, and living on your land, as your father, poor fellow, did before you."

"I wish Sarah felt as you do, Peter," said Mrs. Hewel; "but, of course, she has grown too grand for us, who live contentedly in the country all the year round. Her home is nothing to her now, it seems; and the only thing she thinks of is rushing back to London again as fast as she can."

Sarah, contrary to her wont, received this attack in silence; but she bestowed a fond squeeze on her father's arm, and cast an appealing glance at Peter, which caused the hero's heart to leap in his bosom.

"Of course I mean to live at Barra-combe," said Peter, polishing his eyeglass with reckless energy. "But I said nothing to the people about living there all the year round. On the contrary, I think it more probable that I shall—run up to town myself, occasionally—just for the season."

(To be continued.)

HENRY IRVING.

One mourns not merely a great actor, who had been a great manager. Irving was so romantically remarkable a figure in modern life, having such a hold on one's imagination (partly because he left so much to it), that his death is like the loss of a legend. As an actor, and as a manager, he had his faults; and these faults were obvious. But as a personality he was flawless—armed at all points in an impenetrable and darkly-gleaming armor of his own design. "The Knight from Nowhere" was the title of a little book of Pre-Raphaelite poems that I once read. I always thought of Irving as the Knight from Nowhere.

That he, throughout his memorable tenancy of the Lyceum Theatre, did nothing to encourage the better sort of modern playwright, is a fact for which not he himself should be blamed. It was the fault of the Lyceum Theatre. In that vast and yawning gulf the better sort of modern drama would (for that it consists in the realistic handling of a few characters in ordinary modern life) have been drowned and lost utterly. On a huge stage, facing a huge auditorium, there must be plenty of crowds, bustle, uproar. Drama that gives no scope for these things must be performed in reasonably small places. A more plausible grievance against Irving, as manager, is that in quest of bustling romances or melodramas he seemed generally to alight on hack-work. I think there can be no doubt that he was lacking in literary sense, and was content with any play that gave him scope for a great and central display of his genius in acting. He did not, of course, invent the "star" system. But he carried it as far as it could be carried. And the further he carried it, the greater his success.

From an artistic standpoint, I admit that this system is indefensible. But theatres, alas! have box-offices; and the public cares far more, alack! for a favorite actor than for dramatic art. Justice, then, blames rather the public than the favorite actor.

It was as a producer of Shakespeare that Irving was great in management. He was the first man to give Shakespeare a setting contrived with archaic and æsthetic care—a setting that should match the pleasure of the eye with the pleasure of the ear. That was a noble conception. Many people object, quite honestly, that the pleasure of the ear is diminished by that of the eye—that spectacle is a foe to poetry. Of course, spectacle may be overdone. Irving may sometimes have overdone it; but he always overdid it beautifully. And there was this further excuse for him: he could not, even had the stage been as bare as a desert, have given us the true music and magic of Shakespeare's verse. He could not declaim. That was one of the defects in his art. His voice could not be attuned to the glories of rhythmic cadence. It was a strange, suggestive voice that, admirably attuned itself to the subtleties of Irving's conception of whatever part he was playing. It was Irving's subtle conception, always, that we went to see. Here, again, Irving was an innovator. I gather that the actors of his day had been simple, rough-and-ready, orotund fellows who plunged into this or that play, very much as the water horse plunges through the reeds. They were magnificent, but they had no pretensions to intellect. Irving had these pretensions, and he never failed to justify them. One missed the music of the verse, but was always arrested, stimulated, by the

meanings that he made the verse yield to him. These subtle and sometimes profound meanings were not always Shakespeare's own. Now and again, the verse seemed to yield them to Irving only after an intense effort, and with a rather bad grace. All the parts that Irving played were exacting parts, but he had his revenge sometimes, exacting even more from them. This was another defect in his art: he could not impersonate. His voice, face, figure, port, were not transformable. But so fine was the personality to which they belonged that none cried shame when this or that part had to submit to be crushed by it. Intransformable, he was—multiradiant, though. He had, in acting, a keen sense of humor—of sardonic, grotesque, fantastic humor. He had an incomparable power for eeriness—for stirring a dim sense of mystery; and not less masterly was he in evoking a sharp sense of horror. His dignity was magnificent in purely philosophic or priestly gentleness, or in the gaunt aloofness of philosopher or king. He could be benign with a tinge of malevolence, and arrogant with an undercurrent of sweetness. As philosopher or king, poet or prelate, he was matchless. One felt that if Charles the Martyr, Dante, Wolsey, were not precisely as he was, so much the worse for Wolsey, Dante, Charles the Martyr. On the other hand, less august types, such as men of action and men of passion, were outside his range, and suffered badly when he dragged them within it. Macbeth had a philosophic side, which enabled Macbeth to come fairly well out of the ordeal. But Romeo's suicide in the vault of Capulet could only be regarded as a merciful release. Unfortunately, though I saw and can remember Irving as Romeo, I never saw him as Hamlet. This is one of the regrets of my life. I can imagine the gentleness (with a faint strain of

cruelty), the aloofness, the grace and force of intellect, in virtue of which that performance must have been a very masterpiece of interpretation. I can imagine, too, the mystery with which Irving must have involved, rightly, the figure of Hamlet, making it loom through the mist mightily, as a world-type, not as a mere individual—making it loom as it loomed in the soul of Shakespeare himself—not merely causing it to strut agreeably, little, as in the average production. Above all, I can imagine how much of sheer beauty this interpretation must have had. Though, as I have said, Irving could not do justice to the sound of blank-verse, his prime appeal was always to the sense of beauty. It was not, I admit, to a sense of obvious beauty. It was to a sense of strange, delicate, almost mystical and unearthly beauty. To those who possessed not, nor could acquire, this sense, Irving appeared always in a rather ridiculous light. "Why does he walk like this? Why does he talk like that?" But, for any one equipped to appreciate him, his gait and his utterance were not less dear than his face—were part of a harmony that was as fine as it was strange. And, though the cruder members of the audience could not fall under the spell of this harmony, they were never irreverent until they reached their homes. Never once at the Lyceum did I hear a titter. Irving's presence dominated even those who could not be enchanted by it. His magnetism was intense, and unceasing. What exactly magnetism is, I do not know. It may be an exhalation of the soul, or it may be a purely physical thing—an effusion of certain rays which will one day be discovered, and named after their discoverer—Professor Jenkinson, perhaps: the Jenkinson Rays. I only know that Irving possessed this gift of magnetism in a supreme degree. And I conjecture that

to it, rather than to the quality of his genius, which was a thing to be really appreciated only by the few, was due the unparalleled sway that he had over the many.

In private life he was not less magnetic than on the stage. The obituarists seem hardly to have done justice to the intensely interesting personality of Irving in private life. He has been depicted by them merely as a benevolent gentleman who was always doing this or that obscure person a good turn. Certainly, Irving was benevolent, and all sorts of people profited by his generosity. But these two facts are poor substitutes for the impression that Irving made on those who were brought into contact with him. He was always courteous and gracious, and everybody was fascinated by him; but I think there were few who did not also fear him. Always in the company of his friends and acquaintances—doubtless, not in that of his most intimate friends—there was an air of sardonic reserve behind his cordiality. He seemed always to be watching, and watching from a slight altitude. As when, on the first or last night of a play, he made his speech before the curtain, and concluded by calling himself the public's "respectful—devoted—loving—servant," with special emphasis on the word "servant," he seemed always so like to some mighty Cardinal stooping to wash the feet of pilgrims at the altar-steps, so, when in private life people had the honor of meeting Irving, his exquisite manner of welcome stirred fear as well as love in their hearts. Irving, I think, wished to be feared as well as loved. He was "a good fellow"; but he was also a man of genius, who had achieved pre-eminence in his art, and, thereby, eminence in the national life; and, naturally, he was not going to let the "good fellow" in him rob him of the respect that was his due. Also, I think, the process of making himself

feared appealed to something elfish in his nature. Remember, he was a comedian, as well as a tragedian. Tragic acting on the stage is, necessarily, an assumption; but comedy comes out of the actor's own soul. Surely, to be ever "grand seigneur," to be ever pontifically gracious in what he said and in his manner of saying it, and to watch the effect that he made, was all wine to the comedic soul of Irving. He enjoyed the dignity of his position, but enjoyed even more, I conjecture, the fun of it. I formed that theory, once and for all, one morning in the year 1895—the morning of the day appointed for various gentlemen to be knighted at Windsor Castle. I was crossing the road, opposite the Marble Arch, when a brougham passed me. It contained Irving, evidently on his way to Paddington. Irving, in his most prelatical mood, had always a touch—a trace here and there—of the old Bohemian. But as I caught sight of him on this occasion—a great occasion, naturally, in his career; though to me it had seemed rather a bathos, this superimposition of a smug Hanoverian knighthood on the Knight from Nowhere—he was the old Bohemian, and nothing else. His hat was tilted at more than its usual angle, and his long cigar seemed longer than ever; and on his face was a look of such ruminant, sly fun as I have never seen equalled. I had but a moment's glimpse of him; but that was enough to show me the soul of a comedian revelling in the part he was about to play—of a comedic philosopher revelling in a foolish world. I was sure that when he alighted on the platform of Paddington his bearing would be more than ever grave and stately, with even the usual touch of Bohemianism obliterated now in honor of the honor that was to befall him.

Apart from his genuine kindness, and his grace and magnetism, it was

this sense that he was always playing a part—that he preserved always, for almost everyone, a certain barrier of mystery—that made Irving so fascinating a figure. That day, when I saw him on his way to Windsor, and tried to imagine just what impression he would make on Queen Victoria, I found myself thinking of the impression made there by Disraeli; and I fancied that the two impressions might be rather similar. Both men were courtiers, yet incongruous in a court. And both had a certain dandyism—the arrangement of their hair and the fashion of their clothes carefully thought out in reference to their appearance and their temperament. And both, it seemed to me, had something of dandyism in the wider, philosophic sense of the word—were men whose whole life was ordered with a certain ceremonial, as courtly functions are ordered. "Brodrigg," certainly, was an English name; but surely Irving had some strong strain of foreign blood:

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neither his appearance nor the quality of his genius was that of an Englishman. Possibly, like Disraeli, he had Spanish blood. Anyhow, his was an exotic mind, like Disraeli's, dominating its drab environment partly by its strength and partly by its strangeness. Both men were romantic to the core, ever conceiving large and grandiose ideas, which they executed with a fond eye to pageantry. And, above all, both men preserved in the glare of fame that quality of mystery which is not essential to genius, but which is the safest insurance against oblivion. It has been truly said that Irving would have been eminent in any walk of life. Had Disraeli the Younger drifted from literature to the foot-lights, and had Henry Brodrigg strayed from the school-room into politics, I dare say that neither our political nor our theatrical history would be very different from what it is—except in the matter of dates.

Max Beerbohm.

OCTOBER 21.

I.

The hundred years have passed, and he
Whose name appeased a nation's fears,
As with a hand laid over sea;
To thunder through the foeman's ears
Defeat before his blast of fire;
Lives in the immortality
That poets dream and noblest souls desire.

II.

Never did nation's need evoke
Hero like him for aid, the while
A Continent was cannon-smoke
Or peace in slavery: this one Isle
Reflecting Nature: this one man
Her sea-hound and her mortal stroke,
With war-worn body aye in battle's van.

III.

And do we love him well, as well
As he his country, we may greet,
With hand on steel, our passing bell
Nigh on the swing, for prelude sweet
To the music heard when his last breath
Hung on its ebb beside the knell,
And *Victory* in his ear sang gracious Death.

IV.

Ah, day of glory! day of fears!
Day of a people bowed as one!
Behold across those hundred years
The lion flash of gun at gun:
Our bitter pride; our love bereaved;
What pall of cloud o'ercame our sun
That day, to bear his wreath, the end achieved.

V.

Joy that no more with murder's frown
The ancient rivals bark apart.
Now Nelson to brave France is shown
A hero after her own heart:
And he now scanning that quick race,
To whom through life his glove was thrown,
Would know a sister spirit to embrace.

The Outlook.

George Meredith.

FROM A COLLEGE WINDOW.

VI.

I was visited, as I sate in my room to-day, by one of those sudden impressions of rare beauty that come and go like flashes, and which leave one desiring a similar experience. The materials of the impression were simple and familiar enough. My room looks out into a little court; there is a plot of grass, and to the right of it an old stone-built wall, close against which stands a row of aged lime-trees. Straight opposite, at right angles to the wall, is the east side of the Hall, with its big plain traceried window

enlivened with a few heraldic shields of stained glass. While I was looking out to-day there came a flying burst of sun, and the little corner became a sudden feast of delicate color; the rich green of the grass, the foliage of the lime-trees, their brown wrinkled stems, the pale moss on the walls, the bright points of color in the emblazonries of the window, made a sudden delicate harmony of tints. I had seen the place a hundred times before without ever guessing what a perfect picture it made.

What a strange power the perception of beauty is! It seems to ebb and flow like some secret tide, independent alike of health or disease, of joy or sorrow. There are times in our lives when we seem to go singing on our way, and when the beauty of the world sets itself like a quiet harmony to the song we uplift. Then again come seasons when all is well with us, when we are prosperous and contented, interested in life and all its concerns, when no perception of beauty comes near us; when we are tranquil and content, and take no heed of the delicate visions of the day; when music has no inner voice, and poetry seems a mere cheerful jingling of ordered phrases. Then again we have a time of gloom and dreariness; work has no briskness, pleasure no savor; we go about our business and our delight alike in a leaden mood of dulness; and yet again, when we are surrounded with care and trouble, perhaps in pain or weakness of body, there flashes into the darkened life an exquisite perception of things beautiful and rare; the vision of a spring copse with all its tapestry of flowers, bright points of radiant color, fills us with a strange yearning, a delightful pain; in such a mood a few chords of music, the haunting melody of some familiar line of verse, the song of a bird at dawn, the light of sunset on lonely fields, thrill us with an inexpressible rapture. Perhaps some of those who read these words will say that it is all an unreal, a fantastic experience of which I speak. Of course there are many tranquil, wholesome, equable natures to whom such an experience is unknown; but it is to me one of the truest and commonest things of my life to be visited by this strange perception and appreciation of beauty, which gives the days in which I am conscious of it a memorable quality, that seems to make them the momen-

tous days of one's life; and yet again the mood is so utterly withdrawn at intervals, that the despondent spirit feels that it can never return; and then a new day dawns, and the sense comes back again to bless me.

If the emotion which I describe followed the variations of bodily health; if it came when all was prosperous and joyful, and was withdrawn when the light was low; if it deserted me in seasons of robust vigor, and came when the bodily vitality was depressed, I could refer it to some physical basis. But it contradicts all material laws, and seems to come and go with a whimsical determination of its own. When it is with me, nothing can banish it; it pulls insistently at my elbow; it diverts my attention in the midst of the gravest business, and, on the other hand, no extremity of sorrow or gloom can suspend it. I have stood beside the grave of one I loved, with the shadow of urgent business, of hard detailed arrangements of a practical kind, hanging over me, with the light gone out of life, and the prospect unutterably dreary; and yet the strange spirit has been with me, so that a strain of music should have power to affect me to tears, and the delicate petals of the very funeral wreaths should draw me into a rapturous contemplation of their fresh curves, their lovely intricacy, their penetrating fragrance. In such a moment one could find it in one's heart to believe that some ethereal soulless creature, like Ariel of the "Tempest," was floating at one's side, directing one's attention like a petulant child, to the things that touched its light-hearted fancy, and constraining one into an unsought enjoyment.

Neither does it seem to be an intellectual process; because it comes in the same self-willed way, alike when one's mind is deeply engrossed in congenial work, as well as when one is busy and distracted; one raises one's head for

an instant, and the sunlight on a flowing water or on an ancient wall, the sound of the wind among trees, the calling of birds, take one captive with the mysterious spell; or on another day when I am working, under apparently the same conditions, the sun may fall golden on the old garden, the dove may murmur in the high elm, the daffodils may hang their sweet heads among the meadow-grass, and yet the scene may be dark to me and silent, with no charm and no significance.

It all seems to enact itself in a separate region of the spirit, neither in the physical nor in the mental region. It may come for a few moments in a day, and then it may depart in an instant. I am taking just now what for the sake of the associations, I call my holiday. I walked to-day with a cheerful companion among spring woods, lying nestled in the folds and dingles of the Sussex hills; the sky was full of flying gleams; the distant ridges, clothed in wood, lay blue and remote in the warm air; but I cared for none of these things. Then, when we stood for a moment in a place where I have stood a hundred times before, where a full stream spills itself over a pair of broken lock-gates into a deserted lock, where the stonecrop grows among the masonry, and the alders root themselves among the mouldering brickwork, the mood came upon me, and I felt like a thirsty soul that has found a bubbling spring coming out cool from its hidden caverns on the hot hillside. The sight, the sound, fed and satisfied my spirit; and yet I had not known that I had needed anything.

That it is, I will not say, a wholly capricious thing, but a thing that depends upon a certain harmony of mood, is best proved by the fact that the same poem or piece of music which can at one time evoke the sensation

most intensely, will at another time fail to convey the slightest hint of charm, so that one can even wonder in a dreary way what it could be that one had ever admired and loved. But it is this very evanescent quality which gives me a certain sense of security. If one reads the lives of people with strong æsthetic perceptions, such as Rossetti, Pater, J. A. Symonds, one feels that these natures ran a certain risk of being absorbed in delicate perception. One feels that a sensation of beauty was to them so rapturous a thing that they ran the risk of making the pursuit of such sensations the one object and business of their existence, of sweeping the waters of life with busy nets, in the hope of entangling some creature "of bright hue and sharp fin"; of considering the days and hours that were unvisited by such perceptions barren and dreary. This is, I cannot help feeling, a dangerous business; it is to make of the soul nothing but a delicate instrument for registering æsthetic perceptions; and the result is a loss of balance and proportion, an excess of sentiment. The peril is that as life goes on, and as the perceptive faculty gets blunted and jaded, a mood of pessimism creeps over the mind.

From this I am personally saved by the fact that the sense of beauty is, as I have said, so whimsical in its movements. I should never think of setting out deliberately to capture these sensations, because it would be so futile a task. No kind of occupation, however prosaic, however absorbing, seems to be either favorable to this perception, or the reverse. It is not even like bodily health, which has its variations, but is on the whole likely to result from a certain defined régime of diet, exercise, and habits; and what would still more preserve me from making a deliberate attempt to capture it would be that it comes perhaps most poignantly and insist-

ently of all when I am uneasy, overstrained, and melancholy. No! the only thing to do is to live one's life without reference to it, to be thankful when it comes, and to be contented when it is withdrawn.

I sometimes think that a great deal of stuff is both written and talked about the beauties of nature. By this I do not mean for a moment that nature is less beautiful than is supposed, but that many of the rapturous expressions one hears and sees used about the enjoyment of nature are very insincere; though it is equally true on the other hand that a great deal of genuine admiration of natural beauty is not expressed, perhaps hardly consciously felt. To have a true and deep appreciation of nature demands a certain poetical force, which is rare; and a great many people who have a considerable power of expression, but little originality, feel bound to expend a portion of this upon expressing an admiration for nature which they do not so much actually feel as think themselves bound to feel, because they believe that people in general expect it of them.

But on the other hand there is, I am sure, in the hearts of many quiet people a real love for and delight in the beauty of the kindly earth, the silent and exquisite changes, the influx and efflux of life, which we call the seasons, the rich transfiguring influences of sunrise and sunset, the slow or swift lapse of clear streams, the march and plunge of sea-billows, the bewildering beauty and aromatic scents of those delicate toys of God which we call flowers, the large air and the sun, the star-strewn spaces of the night.

Those who are fortunate enough to spend their lives in the quiet countryside have much of this tranquil and unuttered love of nature; and others again, who are condemned by circum-

stances to spend their days in toilsome towns, and yet have the instinct, derived perhaps from long generations of country forefathers, feel this beauty, in the short weeks when they are enabled to approach it, more poignantly still.

FitzGerald tells a story of how he went to see Thomas Carlyle in London, and sate with him in a room at the top of his house, with a wide prospect of house-backs and chimney-pots; and how the sage reviled and vituperated the horrors of city life, and yet left on FitzGerald's mind the impression that perhaps after all he did not really wish to leave it.

The fact remains, however, that a love of nature is part of the panoply of cultivation which at the present time people above a certain social standing feel bound to assume. Very few ordinary persons would care to avow that they took no interest in national politics, in games and sport, in literature, in appreciation of nature, or in religion. As a matter of fact the vital interest that is taken in these subjects, except perhaps in games and sport, is far below the interest that is expressed in them. A person who said frankly that he thought that any of these subjects were uninteresting, tiresome or absurd, would be thought stupid or affected, even brutal. Probably most of the people who express a deep concern for these things believe that they are giving utterance to a sincere feeling; but not to expatiate on the emotions which they mistake for the real emotion in the other departments, there are probably a good many people who mistake for a love of nature the pleasure of fresh air, physical movement, and change of scene. Many worthy golfers, for instance, who do not know that they are speaking insincerely, attribute, in conversation, the pleasure they feel in pursuing their game to the agreeable surroundings in

which it is pursued; but my secret belief is that they pay more attention to the lie of the little white ball, and the character of bunkers, than to the pageantry of sea and sky.

As with all other refined pleasures, there is no doubt that the pleasure derived from the observation of nature can be, if not acquired, immensely increased by practice. I am not now speaking of the pursuit of natural history but the pursuit of natural emotion. The thing to aim at, as is the case with all artistic pleasures, is the perception of quality, of small effects. Many of the people who believe themselves to have an appreciation of natural scenery cannot appreciate it except on a sensational scale. They can derive a certain pleasure from wide prospects of startling beauty, rugged mountains, steep gorges, great falls of water—all the things that are supposed to be picturesque. But though this is all very well as far as it goes, it is a very elementary kind of thing. The perception of which I speak is a perception which can be fed in the most familiar scene, in the shortest stroll, even in a momentary glance from a window. The things to look out for are little accidents of light and color, little effects of chance grouping, the transfiguration of some well-known and even commonplace object, such as is produced by the sudden burst into greenness of the trees that peep over some suburban garden wall, or by the sunlight falling, by a happy accident, on pool or flower. Much of course depends upon the inner mood; there are days when it seems impossible to be thrilled by anything, when a perverse dreariness holds the mind; and then all of a sudden the gentle and wistful mood flows back, and the world is full of beauty to the brim.

Here, if anywhere, in this town of ancient colleges, is abundant material of beauty for eye and mind. It is not,

it is true, the simple beauty of nature; but nature has been invoked to sanctify and mellow art. These stately stone-fronted buildings have weathered like crags and precipices. They rise out of rich ancient embowered gardens. They are like the bright birds of the forest dwelling contentedly in gilded cages. These great palaces of learning, beautiful when seen in the setting of sunny gardens, and with even a sterner dignity when planted, like a fortress of quiet, close to the very dust and din of the street, hold many treasures of stately loveliness and fair association; this city of palaces, thick-set with spires and towers, as rich and dim as Camelot, is invested with a romance that few cities can equal; and then the waterside pleasures with their trim alleys, their air of ancient security and wealthy seclusion, have an incomparable charm; day by day, as one hurries or saunters through the streets, the charm strikes across the mind with an incredible force, a newness of impression which is the test of the highest beauty. Yet these again are beauties of a sensational order which beat insistently upon the dullest mind. The true connoisseur of natural beauty acquiesces in, nay prefers an economy, an austerity of effect. The curve of a wood seen a hundred times before, the gentle line of a fallow, a little pool among the pastures, fringed with rushes, the long blue line of the distant downs, the cloud-perspective, the still sunset glow—these will give him ever new delights, and delights that grow with observation and intuition.

I have spoken hitherto of nature as she appears to the unruffled, the perceptive mind; but let us further consider what relation nature can bear to the burdened heart and the overshadowed mood. Is there indeed a *vis medicatrix* in nature which can heal our grief and console our anxieties? "The

country for a wounded heart" says the old proverb. Is that indeed true? I am here inclined to part company with wise men and poets who have spoken and sung of the consoling power of nature. I think it is not so. It is true that anything which we love very deeply has a certain power of distracting the mind. But I think there is no greater agony than to be confronted with tranquil passionate beauty, when the heart and spirit are out of tune with it. In the days of one's joy, nature laughs with us; in the days of vague and fantastic melancholy, there is an air of wistfulness, of mystery, that ministers to our luxurious sadness. But when one bears about the heavy burden of a harassing anxiety or sorrow, then the smile on the face of nature has something poisonous, almost maddening about it. It breeds an emotion that is like the rage of Othello when he looks upon the face of Desdemona, and believes her false. Nature has no sympathy, no pity. She has her work to do, and the swift and bright process goes on; she casts her failures aside with merciless glee; she seems to say to men oppressed by sorrow and sickness, "This is no world for you; rejoice and make merry, or I have no need of you." In a far-off way, indeed, the gentle beauty of nature may help a sad heart, by seeming to assure one that the mind of God is set upon what is fair and sweet; but neither God nor nature seems to have any direct message to the stricken heart.

Not till the fire is dying in the grate
Look we for any kinship with the
stars,

says a subtle poet; and such comfort as nature can give is not the direct comfort of sympathy, and tenderness, but only the comfort that can be resolutely distilled from the contemplation of nature by man's indomitable spirit.

For nature tends to replace rather than to heal; and the sadness of life consists for most of us in the irreplaceableness of the things we love and lose. The lesson is a hard one, that "Nature tolerates, she does not need." Let us only be sure that it is a true one, for nothing but the truth can give us ultimate repose. To the youthful spirit it is different, for all that the young and ardent need is that, if the old falls them, some new delight should be substituted. They but desire that the truth should be hidden from their gaze; as in the childish stories, when the hero and heroine have been safely piloted through danger and brought into prosperity, the door is closed with a snap "They lived happily ever afterwards." But the older spirit knows that the "ever" must be deleted, makes question of the "afterwards," and looks through to the old age of bereavement and sorrow, when the two must again be parted.

But I would have everyone who cares to establish a wise economy of life and joy cultivate, by all means in his power, a sympathy with and a delight in nature. We tend, in this age of ours, when communication is so easy and rapid, when the daily paper brings the whole course of the world into our secluded libraries, to be too busy, too much preoccupied; to value excitement above tranquillity, and interest above peace. It is good for us all to be much alone, not to fly from society, but resolutely to determine that we will not be dependent upon it for our comfort. I would have all busy people make times in their lives when, at the cost of some amusement, and paying the price perhaps of a little melancholy, they should try to be alone with nature and their own hearts. They should try to realize the quiet unwearying life that manifests itself in field and wood. They should wander alone in solitary places, where

the hazel-hidden stream makes music, and the bird sings out of the heart of the forest; in meadows where the flowers grow brightly, or through the copse, purple with bluebells or starred with anemones; or they may climb the crisp turf of the down, and see the wonderful world lie spread out beneath their feet, with some clustering town "smouldering and glittering" in the distance, or lie upon the cliff-top, with the fields of waving wheat behind, and the sea spread out like a wrinkled marble floor in front; or walk on the sand beside the falling waves. Perhaps a *soi-disant* sensible man may see these words and think that I am a sad sentimentalist. I cannot help it; it is what I believe; nay, I will go further, and say that a man who does not wish to do these things is shutting one of the doors of his spirit, a door through which many sweet and true things come in. "Consider the lilies of the field" said long ago One whom we profess to follow as our guide and Master. And a quiet receptiveness, an openness of eye, a simple readiness to take in these gentle impressions is, I believe with all my heart, of the essence of true wisdom. We have all of us our work to do in the world; but we have our lesson to learn as well. The man with the muck-rake in the old parable, who raked together the straws and the dust of the street, was faithful enough if he was set to do that lowly work; but had he only cared to look up, had he only had a moment's leisure, he would have seen that the celestial crown hung close above his head and within reach of his forgetful hand.

There is a well-known passage in a brilliant modern satire where a trenchant satirist declares that he has tracked all human emotions to their lair, and has discovered that they all consist of some dilution of primal and degrading instincts. But the pure and passionless love of natural beauty can

have nothing that is acquisitive or re-productive about it. There is no physical instinct to which it can be referred; it arouses no sense of proprietorship; it cannot be connected with any impulse for self-preservation. If it were merely aroused by tranquil, comfortable amenities of scene, it might be referable to the general sense of well-being, and of contented life under pleasant conditions. But it is aroused just as strongly by prospects that are inimical to life and comfort, lashing storms, inaccessible peaks, desolate moors, wild sunsets, foaming seas. It is a sense of wonder, of mystery; it arouses a strange and yearning desire for we know not what; very often a rich melancholy attends it, which is yet not painful or sorrowful, but heightens and intensifies the significance, the value of life. I do not know how to interpret it, but it seems to me to be a call from without, a beckoning of some large and loving power to the soul. The primal instincts of which I have spoken all tend to concentrate the mind upon itself, to strengthen it for a selfish part; but the beauty of nature seems to be a call to the spirit to come forth, like the voice which summoned Lazarus from the rock-hewn sepulchre. It bids us to believe that our small identities, our limited desires do not say the last word for us, but that there is something larger and stronger outside, in which we may claim a share. As I write these words, I look out upon a strange transfiguration of a familiar scene. The sky is full of black and inky clouds, but from the low setting sun there pours an intense pale radiance, which lights up house-roofs, trees, and fields, with a white light; a flight of pigeons, wheeling high above the roofs, become brilliant specks of moving light upon a background of dark rolling vapor. What is the meaning of the intense and rapturous

thrill that this sends through me? It is no selfish delight, no personal profit that it gives me. It promises me nothing, it sends me nothing but a deep and mysterious satisfaction, which seems to make light of my sullen and petty moods.

I was reading the other day, in a strange book, of the influence of magic upon the spirit, the vague dreams of the deeper mind that could be awakened by the contemplation of symbols. It seemed to me to be unreal and fantastic, a manufacturing of secrets, a playing of whimsical tricks with the mind; and yet I ought not to say that, because it was evidently written in good faith. But I have since reflected that it is true in a sense of all those who are sensitive to the influences of the spirit. Nature has a magic for many of us—that is to say, a secret power that strikes across our lives at intervals, with a message from an unknown region. And this message is aroused too by symbols; a tree, a flash of light on lonely clouds, a flower, a stream—simple things that we have seen a thousand times—have sometimes the power to cast a spell over our spirit, and to bring something that is great and incommunicable near us. This must be called magic, for it is not a thing which can be explained by ordinary laws, or defined in precise terms; but the spell is there, real, insistent, undeniable; it seems to make a bridge for the spirit to pass into a far-off, dimly apprehended region; it gives us a sense of great issues and remote visions; it leaves us with a longing which has no mortal fulfilment.

These are of course merely idiosyncrasies of perception; but it is a far more difficult task to attempt to indicate what the perception of beauty is, and whence the mind derives the unhesitating canons with which it judges and appraises beauty. The reason, I believe, why the sense is weaker

than it need be in many people, is that, instead of trusting their own instinct in the matter, they from their earliest years endeavor to correct their perception of what is beautiful by the opinions of other people, and to superimpose on their own taste the taste of others. I myself hold strongly that nothing is worth admiring which is not admired sincerely. Of course one must not form one's opinions too early, or hold them arrogantly or self-sufficiently. If one finds a large number of people admiring or professing to admire a certain class of objects, a certain species of scene, one ought to make a resolute effort to see what it is that appeals to them. But there ought to come a time, when one has imbibed sufficient experience, when one should begin to decide and to distinguish, and to form one's own taste. And then I believe it is better to be individual than catholic, and better to attempt to feed one's own genuine sense of preference, than to continue attempting to correct it by the standard of other people.

It remains that the whole instinct for admiring beauty is one of the most mysterious experiences of the mind. There are certain things, like the curves and colors of flowers, the movements of young animals, that seem to have a perennial attraction for the human spirit. But the enjoyment of natural scenery, at all events of wild and rugged prospects, seems hardly to have existed among ancient writers, and to have originated as late as the eighteenth century. Dr. Johnson spoke of mountains with disgust, and Gray seems to have been probably the first man who deliberately cultivated a delight in the sight of those "monstrous creatures of God," as he calls mountains. Till his time, the emotions that "nodding rocks" and "cascades" gave our forefathers seem mostly to have been emotions of terror; but Gray

seems to have had a perception of the true quality of landscape beauty, as indeed that wonderful, chilly, unsatisfied, critical nature seems to have had of almost everything. His letters are full of beautiful vignettes, and it pleases me to think that he visited Rydal and thought it beautiful, about the time that Wordsworth first drew breath.

But the perception of beauty in art, in architecture, in music, is a far more complicated thing, for there seem to be no fixed canons here; what one needs in art, for instance, is not that things should be perfectly seen and accurately presented; a picture of hard fidelity is often entirely displeasing; but one craves for a certain sense of personality, of emotion, of inner truth; something that seizes tyrannously upon the soul, and makes one desire more of the intangible and indescribable essence.

I always feel that the instinct for beauty is perhaps the surest indication of some essence of immortality in the soul; and indeed there are moments when it gives one the sense of pre-existence, the feeling that one has loved these fair things in a region that is further back even than the beginnings of consciousness. Blake, indeed, in one of his wild half-inspired utterances, went even further, and announced that a man's hopes of immor-

talities depended not upon virtuous conduct but upon intellectual perception. And it is hard to resist the belief, when one is brought into the presence of perfect beauty, in whatever form it may come, that the deep craving it arouses is meant to receive a satisfaction more deep and real than the act of mere contemplation can give. I have felt in such moments as if I were on the verge of grasping some momentous secret, as if only the thinnest of veils hung between me and some knowledge that would set my whole life and being on a different plane. But the moment passes, and the secret delays. Yet we are right to regard such emotions as direct messages from God; because they bring with them no desire of possession, which is the sign of mortality, but rather the divine desire to be possessed by them; that the reality, whatever it be, of which beauty is the symbol, may enter in and enliven the soul. It remains a mystery, like all the best things to which we draw near. And the joy of all mysteries is the certainty which comes from their contemplation, but there are many doors yet for the soul to open on her upward and inward way: that we are at the threshold and not near the goal; and then, like the glow of sunset, rises the hope that the grave, far from being the gate of death, may be indeed the gate of life.

Cornhill Magazine.

THE VROUW GROBELAAR'S LEADING CASES.

THE COWARD

"After all," said the Vrouw Grobelaar weightily, "a coward is but one with keener eyes than his fellows. No young man fears a ghost till it is dark, but the coward sees the stars in the daytime, like a man at the bottom of a well, and ghosts walk all about him.

"A coward should always be a married man," she added. "You may say,

Katje, that it is hard on the woman. It is what I would expect of you. But when you have experience of wifehood you will come to the knowledge that it is the man's character which counts, and it is the woman's part to make up his deficiencies. With what men learn by practicing on their wives, the world has been made.

"If you would cease to cackle in that silly fashion I would tell you of Andreas van Wyck, the coward—a tale that is known to few. Well, then!

"He was a bushveld Boer, farming cattle on good land, not a day's ride from the Tiger River. His wife, Anna, was of the de Villiers stock from the borders of the Free State, a commandant's daughter, and the youngest of fourteen children. They were both people of a type common enough. Andreas was to all seeming just such a Burgher as a hundred others who have grown rich quietly, never heard of outside their own districts, yet as worthy as others whom every one nods to at Nachemaal. Anna, too, was of an everyday pattern, a short plump woman, with a rosy solemn face and pleasant eyes—a sound Boer woman, who could carry out her saddle, catch her horse and mount him without help. You see, in her big family, the elders were all men, and most had seen service against the Kafirs, and a girl there won esteem not by fallals and little tripping graces, but by usefulness and courage and good fellowship. She saw Andreas first when he was visiting his mother's aunt in her neighborhood. There was shooting at a target, for a prize of an English saddle, and no one has ever said of him that he was not a wonderful shot. He carried off the prize easily, against all the Boers of those parts, and Anna's father and brothers among them. A few months later they were married.

"They drove from Anna's home to Andreas' farm on the bushveld in a Cape cart with two horses, and sat close under the hood while the veld about them was lashed with the first rains of December. It was no time for a journey by road, but in those days the country was not checkered with railway lines as it is now, and Anna had nothing to say against a trifle of hardship. For miles about them the

rolling country of the Free State was veiled with a haze of rain, and the wind drove it in sheets here and there, till the horses staggered against it, and the drum of the storm on the hood of the cart was awesome and mournful. Towards afternoon, after a long, slow trek, they came down the slope towards Buys' Drift, and Andreas pulled his horses up at the edge of the water.

"The rains had swelled the river to a flood, and it ran with barely a ripple where ordinarily the bushes were clear of the water. Full a hundred and fifty yards it spanned, and as they looked, they saw it carry past a dead ox and the rags of uprooted huts.

"We can never cross till it goes down," said Andreas. "I am sorry for it, but there is no choice. We must go back to your father's house."

"Anna pressed his arm and smiled.

"You are joking," she said. "You know well that I will not go back there to-night for all the floods in ten years. No girl would, that valued her husband and herself."

"But look at the drift!" he urged.

"It is a big head of water," she agreed. "I was once before upset in such a flood as this. You must head them upstream a little, and then strike down again to the opposite bank."

"Not I," he answered. "I am not going to drown myself for a trifle of pride, nor you either. We must go back."

"She shook her head. 'Not that!' she replied. 'Give me the reins and the whip.' Before he could resist she had taken them from his hands. 'Put your feet on our box,' she directed, 'or the water will float it away. Now then!'

"She drew the whip across the horses' quarters, and in a minute they were in the river, while Andreas sat marvelling.

"You understand that it was first necessary to move upstream to a point in the middle of the river. She

steadied the horses with a taut hold on the reins, for her young wrists were strong as iron, and spoke to them cheerily as the flood leaped against their chests, and they stood and hesitated. The rain drove in their faces viciously; Andreas, his face sheltered by the wide brim of his hat, had to rub away the water again and again in order to see; but Anna knit her brows and endured the storm gallantly, while with whip and rein and voice she pushed the team on towards the place of turning.

"The rushing of the water filled their ears, and before them, between the high banks of the Vaal, they saw only a world of brown water, streaked with white froth, hurling down upon them. It rose above the foot-board and swirled to the level of the seat. The horses, with heads lifted high, were often, for an anxious moment or two, free of the shifting bottom and swimming. A tree, blundering downstream, struck the near wheel, and they were nearly capsized, the water rushing in over their knees. As they tilted Andreas gave a cry, and shifted in his place. Anna called to her horses and knit her brows.

"At last it was time to humor them around, and this, as I need not tell you, is the risky business in crossing a flooded drift. With somewhat of a draw on the near rein, Anna checked the team, and then, prodding with her whip, headed the horses over and started them. They floundered and splashed, and Andreas half rose from his seat, with lips clenched on a cry. The traces tightened under the water, a horse stumbled and vanished for a moment, and, as the cart tilted sickeningly, the man, ashen-faced and strung, leaped from it and was whirled away.

"The water took him under, drew him gasping over the bottom, and spat him up again to swim desperately. His head was down-stream, and, as

there was a sharp bend half a mile below, he had no extraordinary difficulty in bringing his carcass to shore. He lay for a minute among the bushes, and then ran back to see what had become of the cart, the horses, and his wife. He found them ashore, safe and waiting for him, and Anna wringing the wet from her hair as she stood beside the horses' heads.

"'You are not hurt?' she asked, before he could speak. Her face was grave and flushed, her voice very quiet and orderly.

"'No,' he said.

"'Ah!' she said, and climbed again into the cart, and made room for him in the place of the driver.

"That was how he discovered himself to his wife. In that one event of their wedding-day he revealed to Anna what was a secret from all the world—perhaps even from himself. He was a coward, the thing Anna had never known yet of any man—never thought enough upon to learn how little it may really matter or how greatly it may ruin a character. When her brothers, having drunk too much at a *waapenschauw*, wished to make a quarrel quickly, they called their man a coward. But for her it had been like saying he was a devil—a futile thing that was only offensive by reason of its intention. And now she was married to a coward, and must learn the ways of it.

"They spoke no more of the matter. Anna shrank from a reference to it. She could not find a word to flit the subject that did not seem an attack on the man with whom she must spend her life. They settled down to their business of living together very quietly, and I think the commandant's daughter did no braver thing than when she recognized the void in her husband, and then, holding it loathsome and unforgivable, passed it over and put it from her mind out of mere loyalty to him.

"The years went past at their usual pace, and there occurred nothing to earmark any hour and make it memorable, till the Kafirs across the Tiger River rose. I do not remember what men said the rising was about. Probably their chief was wearied with peace and drunkenness and wanted change; but anyhow the commando that was called out to go and shoot the tribe into order included Andreas, the respected burgher and famous shot. The field-cornet rode round and left the summons at his house, and he read it to Anna.

"Now I shall get some real shooting," he said, with bright eyes.

"She looked at him carefully, and noted that he lifted down his rifle with the gaiety of a boy who goes hunting. It brought a warmth to her heart that she dared not trust.

"It is a pity you should go before the calves are weaned," she said.

"Pooh! You can see to them," he answered.

"But you could so easily buy a substitute. It would even be cheaper to send a substitute," she urged half-heartedly.

"You see she had no faith at all in his courage. The years she had lived with him had brought forth nothing to undo the impression he had left in her mind when he sprang from the cart and abandoned her in the middle of the Vaal River, and this emergency had awakened all her old fear lest he should be proclaimed a coward before the men of his world.

"I dare say it would be cheaper and better in every way," he answered with some irritation. "But for all that I am going. This is a war, the first I have known, and I am not going to miss the chance. So you had better get my gear ready."

"With that he commenced to tear up rags and to oil and clean his rifle.

"She bade him adieu next day and

saw him canter off with some doubt. He had shown no hesitation at all in this matter. From the time of the coming of the summons he had been all eagerness and interest. It might have led another to think she had been wrong, that the man who feared water feared nothing else; but Anna knew well, from a hundred small signs, that her husband had no stability of valor in him, that he was and would remain—a coward.

"Next day the fighting had commenced, and Anna, working serenely about her house, soon had news of it. There was a promise of interest in this little war from the start. The commando, under Commandant Jan Wepener, had made a quick move and thrust forward to the crown of the little hills that overlook the Tiger River and the flat land beyond it, which was the home of the tribe. Here they made their laager, and it was plain that the fighting would consist either of descents by the Burghers on the kraals, or of attacks by the Kafirs upon the hills. Either way, there must be some close meetings and hardy hewing, a true and searching test for good men. The young Burgher that told her of it, sitting upon his horse at the door as though he were too hurried and too warlike to dismount and enter, rejoiced noisily at the prospect of coming to grips.

"Anna puckered her brows. 'It is not the way to fight,' she said doubtfully. 'A bush and a rifle and a range of six hundred yards is what beat the Basutos.'

"Pooh!" laughed the young Burgher. "You say that because your husband shoots so well, and you want him to be marked for good fighting."

"She frowned a little, inwardly accusing herself of this same meaning. She would gladly have put these thoughts from her, for brave folk, whether men or women, have com-

monly but one face, and she hated to show friendship to her husband and harbor distrust of him in her bosom. When the young Burgher at last rode away, galloping uselessly to seem what he wished to be—a wild person of sudden habits—she sat on the stoep for a while and thought deeply. Then she sighed, as though pondering brought her no decision, and went once more about her work, always with an eye cocked to the window to watch for any rider coming back from the laager with news of affairs.

"But there was a shyness on both sides for a week. The Kafirs had not yet ripened their minds to an attack on the hills, nor had the Burghers quite sloughed their custom of orderliness and respect for human life. There was a little shooting, mostly at the landscape, by those whose trigger-fingers itched; but at last a man coming back with a hole in his shoulder to be doctored and admired halted at the door and told of a fight.

"He sat in a long chair and told about the pain in his shoulder, and opened his shirt to show the wound. Anna leaned against the doorpost and heard him. Outside his brown pony was rattling the rings of the bit and switching at flies, and she perceived the faint smell of its sweat-stained saddlery and the horse-odor she knew so well. Before her, the tall grimy man, with bandages looped about him, his pleasant face a little yellow from the loss of blood, babbled boastfully. It was a scene she was familiar with, for of old on the Free State border the Burghers and the Basutos were for ever jostling one another, and—I told you her father was a commandant!

"But tell me about the battle," she urged.

"*'Allemachtig!'* exclaimed the wounded man. 'But that was a fight! It was night, you know, about an hour after the dying of the moon, and there

was a spit of rain and some little wind. The commandant was very wakeful, I can tell you, and he had us all out from under the wagons, though it was very cold, and sent us out to the ridge above the drift. And there we lay in the long grass among the bushes on our rifles, while the field cornet crawled to and fro behind us on his belly and cursed those who were talking. I didn't talk—I know too much about war. But your man did. I heard him, and the field-cornet swore at him in a whisper.'

"What was he saying?" Anna asked quickly.

"Oh, dreadful things. He called him a dirty takhaar with a hair-hung tongue, and—"

"No, no!" cried Anna impatiently. 'What did my husband say, I mean. What was he talking about when the field-cornet stopped him?'

"Oh, he was just saying that it would be worth turning out into the cold if only the Kafirs would come. And then he cried out, 'What's that moving,' and the field-cornet crawled up and cursed him.'

"Go on about the fight," said Anna, looking from him, that he might not see what spoke in her eyes.

"Yes. Well, I was just getting nicely to sleep, when somebody down on my left began firing. Then I saw, down the hill, the flashes of guns, and soon I could hear great lumps of pot-leg screaming through the air. They are firing a lot of pot-leg, those Kafirs. I fired at a flash that came out pretty regularly, and by-and-by it ceased to flash. Then, as I rose on my knees, a great knob of pot-leg hit me in the shoulder, and I cried out and fell down. Your husband came to me and helped me to go back to the rocks, and soon after all the shooting stopped. The Burghers found three dead Kafirs in the morning, so we won.'

"You were very brave," said Anna.

"'Yes, wasn't I? And so was your husband, I believe,' said the wounded man. 'I couldn't see him, but I've no doubt he was. They'll try to rush the drift again to-night.'

"'What makes you think so?' Anna demanded, starting.

"'Oh, they've been gathering for some days,' answered the other. 'It's what they are trying to do. You see there are no farms to plunder on the other side of the river, so they must cross.'

"'I see,' said Anna slowly.

"When he was ready, she helped the wounded man again to his saddle, and saw him away, then turned, with the light of a swift resolution in her eyes, to the task of getting ready to go to Andreas. The river and the hills were but a short six hours from her farm, and on a horse she could have ridden it in less. But it was no wish of hers to bring any slur upon her husband, so she prepared to go to him in a cart, taking shirts and shoes and tobacco, like a dutiful wife visiting her husband on commando. And for a purpose she took no trouble to name to herself, she put in her pocket a little pug-nosed revolver which Andreas had once bought, played with for a while, and then forgotten.

"A Kafir came with her, to see to the horses and so on, for she was to travel in no other manner than that in which Burghers' wives travel every day; but once clear of the farm she took the reins and the whip to herself, and drove swiftly, pushing the team anxiously along the way. So well did she guide her path, that by evening they were slipping down the road towards the drift of the Tiger River, and when the light of day began to be mottled with night, they had crossed the drift and were passing up the right bank. When at length the darkness came, they were at the foot of the hills which the commando held.

"Here Anna alighted, and left the 'boy' to outspan and watch the cart. In a basket on her arm she had a bottle of whisky and a bottle of medicine for rheumatism, that would make her coming seemly, and with the little revolver in her pocket knocking against her knee at every step, she faced the dark and empty veld, and began the ascent of the hill alone. She was come to be a spur to her husband. This she knew clearly enough, yet as she went along, with the thin wind of the night on her forehead, she wasted no thoughts, but bent herself to the business of finding the laager and coming to Andreas. About her were the sombre hills, that are, in fact, mere bushy kopjes, but in the darkness, and to one alone, portentous and devious mountains. Veld-bred as she was, the business of path-finding was with her an instinct, like that of throwing up your hand to guard your eyes when sparks spout from the fire. Yet in an hour she lost herself utterly.

"She strove here and there, practising all the tricks of the hunter to avoid moving in a circle, and so on. She wrenched her skirts through bushes that seemed to have hands. She plunged over stones that were noisy and ragged underfoot; she stumbled in ant-bear holes and bruised herself on ant-hills. And after a long time she sat down and listened—listened patiently for the alarm of firing to beckon a course to her. And there she waited, her basket on her knee, her arms folded across it, for all the world like a quiet woman in church, with no tremors, but only a mild and enduring expectancy.

"It came at last, a tempest of shooting that seemed all round her. Below her, and to her left, there were splashes of white flame. The fighter's daughter knew at once that these were from Kafir guns. Overhead, the rip-rip-rip of the Burghers' rifles pattered like

rain on a roof, like hoofs on a road. And all was near at hand. Despite her endeavors, she had come nearly the whole way round the hill, and was now barely outside the cross-fire. She stood up, shaking her skirts into order, and took in the position. It was a bad one, but it pointed the way to Andreas, and with a pat to her tumbled clothes she settled the bottles safely again in the basket and resumed her climbing.

"She thrust along through the bushes, while the clatter of the rifles grew nearer, and presently there was a flick—like a frog diving into mud—close by her feet, and she knew there were bullets coming her way. Flick—plop! It came again and again and again.

"Some one sees me moving and is shooting at me," said Anna to herself, and stopped to rest where a rock gave cover. The bullets, lobbing like pellets tossed from a window, came singing down towards her, clicking into the bushes, while below she could see the progress of the battle written in leaping dots of fire. The Kafirs were spreading among the boulders—so much could be read from the growing breadth of the line of their fire, and Anna was quick to grasp the meaning of this movement. They were preparing to rush the hill, as of old the Basutos had done. The Kafirs with guns were being sent out to the flanks of the line to keep up a fire while the centre went forward with the assegais. It was an old manoeuvre; she had heard her brothers talk of it many times, and also—she remembered it now—of the counter-trick to meet it. There must be bush at hand, to set fire to, that the advance may be seen as soon as it forms and withered with musketry.

"Regardless of that deft rifleman among the Burghers who continued to drop his bullets about her, Anna took her basket again on her arm, came forth from her rock, and resumed the climb. She was obliged to make a

good deal of noise, for it was too dark and uncomfortable to enable her to choose her steps well. Up above, the Burghers must have heard her plainly, though none but a keen eye would pick the blackness of her shape from the bosom of the night. The summit and the foot of the hill were alive with the spitting of the guns, and all the while the unknown sharpshooter searched about her for her life with clever plunging shots that flicked the dirt up. One bullet whisked through a piece of her skirt.

"Now, I wonder if it can be Andreas who shoots so neatly," said Anna, half-smiling to herself. 'He would be surprised if he knew what he is shooting at. Dear me, this is a very long and tiresome hill.'

"It was almost at that moment that she heard it—the beginning of the rush. There came up the hill, like a slow and solemn drum-music, the droning war-song of the Kafirs as they moved forward in face of the fire. It was an awful thing to hear, that bloody rhythm booming through the dome of the night. It is a song I have heard in the daytime, for a show, and it rings like heavy metal. Anna straightened herself and looked about her; there was nothing else for it but that she must start a fire, ere the battle-line swept up and on to the laager. It would draw more shooting upon her; but that gave her no pause. She had matches in her pocket, and fumbled about her and found a little thorn-bush that crackled while it tore her naked hands. Crouching by it, she dragged a bunch of the matches across the side of the box,—they spluttered and flamed, and she thrust them into the bush. It took light slowly, for there were yet the dregs of sap in it, but as it lighted, the deft rifleman squirted bullet after bullet all around her, aiming on the weakling flame she nursed with her bleeding hands.

"But for this she had no care at all. She had ceased to perceive it. Sheltering the place with her body, she drew out more matches, tore up grass, and built the little flame to a blaze that promised to hold and grow. As it cracked among the twigs, she wrenched the bush from the ground and ran forward with it upheld.

"'Burghers, Burghers!' she screamed. 'Pas op! The Kafirs are coming up the hill!'

"And whirling it widely she flung the burning bush from her with all her force, and watched its fire spread in the grass where it fell. Then she, too, fell down, and lay among the rocks and plants, scarcely breathing.

"Up above, the old commandant, peering under the pent of his hand, saw the torch waved and the figure that flung it.

"'Allemachtig!' he cried. 'It's the Vrouw van Wyck!'

"The next instant he was shouting, 'And here come the Kafirs! Shoot, Burghers, shoot straight and hard.'

"Where she lay, near the fire that now spread across the flank of the hill in broad bands among the dry grass and withered bushes, the Vrouw van Wyck heard that last cry and lifted her head as a torrent of shooting answered it. The Kafirs and the Burghers were at grips, and it seemed that all around her the night rustled with secret men that slunk about. There was great danger to her at last, for either in going forward or going back she might fall into the hands of the Kafirs, and—oh, you can never tell what that may mean! At the best and choicest it is death, but at the worst it is torment with loathly outrage, the torment and the degradation of Sheol. Anna knew that, knew it well and feared it. That daunted her, and as the thought grew clearer in her mind, dread gripped her, and she huddled

among the stones with ears alert and a heart that clacked as it beat.

"Noises threatened her, and to them, the casual noises of the night, she gave ear anxiously, while above her the fight raged direfully and all unheard. At one time she truly saw naked Kafirs go up the hill,—the light of the fire glinted on the points of their assegais and threw a dull gleam on the muscle-rippled skin of them. Next, stones falling made her start, and ere this alarm was passed she heard the unmistakable clatter of shod feet among the boulders, and—plain and loud—an oath as some man stumbled. He was already to be seen, vaguely; then he was near at hand, coming upon her.

"'Now, what in God's name is this?' she cried, and rose. In her hand was the little blunt-nosed revolver.

"The man ran through a bush towards her. 'Anna,' he cried, 'Anna!'

"It was Andreas, and he took hold of her body and pressed her close to him.

"She thrilled with a superb exaltation of pride and joy, and put her arms about him.

"'What are you doing here?' he demanded.

"'I was coming to you,' she said, and with a little laugh, as of a girl, she showed him the basket, with the bottles yet in it. 'And you?' she asked, then.

"'Me?' he said. 'Why, I've come for you, of course. The Kafirs are at the ridge, and God knows what might happen to you. Was it you I was shooting at down there all the time?'

"'You shot very well,' she answered, and showed him the hole in her skirt where the bullet had pierced it. She heard him mutter another oath.

"'But we must be going,' he said; 'this is no place to be talking—no place at all. We must get round to the laager again. Let me have your arm, and tread quietly, and we must leave the basket.'

"'Not I,' she answered. 'I have brought it all this way, and I will not leave it now.'

"He answered with a short laugh, and they commenced to move upward. But by now the fire had hold of the thorn trees all about, and their path was as light as day. It was too dangerous to attempt to climb to the ridge, and after walking for a while they were compelled to find the cover of a rock and remain still. Anna sat on the ground, very tired and content, and her husband peered out and watched what was to be seen.

"'We have beaten them,' he said. 'I can see a lot of them running back. Pray God none come this way. I wish I had not left my rifle.'

"'Yes,' said Anna, 'you left your rifle, and came unarmed to help me.'

"'It would have been awkward among the bushes,' he explained, and was suddenly silent, looking out over the top of the rock.

"'What is it?' asked Anna. He gave no answer, so she rose and went to his side and looked too, with her arms on his shoulder.

"The rip-rip of the Burghers' rifles

Blackwood's Magazine.

sounded yet, but there was now another sound. The bushes creaked and the stones rocked with men returning down the hill. Not two hundred paces away they were to be seen—many scores of Kafirs dodging downhill, taking what cover they could, pausing and checking at each rock and mound that gave shelter from the bullets.

"Anna felt her husband quiver as he saw the crowd swooping upon him.

"'Take this,' she said, and pressed the little revolver into his hand. 'It would be well not to be taken. But kiss me first.'

"He looked from the retreating and nearing Kafirs to her, with a face knotted in perplexity.

"'It is the only thing,' she urged, and drew his lips to hers.

"He looked down at the little weapon in his palm, and spoke as with an effort.

"'I was never a brave man, Anna,' he said, 'and I can't do this. Will you not do it?'

"She nodded and took the pistol. The Kafirs found nothing to work their hate upon."

Perceval Gibbon.

THE PROSPECTS OF LITERATURE.

A century ago England was living in a golden age. The time of Nelson and of Pitt was also the time of Sir Walter Scott and Wordsworth, of Lamb and Coleridge, of Hazlitt and De Quincey. The year of Trafalgar was the year of *Christabel* and of *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*. And the promise was yet richer than the performance. The first chapters of *Waverley*, long hidden from the world, were already written, and Byron, a freshman at Cambridge, was meditating his *Hours of Idleness*. The triumphant success of the *Edinburgh Review* had

proved how deep and wide was the interest taken in literature. Opinions were loudly outspoken; antipathies were not concealed; and men were courageous enough to exchange hard blows without wincing and without promising the insipidity of future praise in return for present flattery. Briefly, England was victorious in arts as in arms, and the most ambitious of her sons might regard the prospect with equal pride and hope.

To-day we can only look forward in doubt and uncertainty. There are but two great poets in England—Mr.

George Meredith and Mr. Swinburne, and they are both silent. In fiction, as in poetry, the older writers are still the best, since a vast fecundity does not atone for the prevailing lack of distinction. A similarity of workmanship, a tired use of the old materials, suggest that the convention of novel-writing is wearing out, and that it will not be renewed until a man of genius makes it afresh. When the couplet had been perfected by Pope a revolution was needed to save poetry from a mechanical ease, and if there be not a sudden change of taste and talent, fiction will die, like the powdered epic, of inanition. The language of history and criticism, better handled than the language of fiction, gives us some cause for satisfaction. Our prose-writers are at last recovering from the flood of words in which the rhetoricians, Carlyle and Ruskin, involved them, and are learning that economy of speech may express a profounder truth than a prodigal magniloquence. But here also we look in vain for a dominant personality, a conspicuous influence, and we must take what pleasure we can in the care and intelligence with which much of our journey-work is done.

The great difference between the England of to-day and the England of 1805, as regards literature, is accidental. Since the golden age of Coleridge and Wordsworth a new public has grown up. The readers of a hundred years ago were few in number and leisurely of habit. Those who had no tincture of learning left literature alone, and those who read read not in haste but with understanding. A book was not a thing to borrow from a circulating library and throw aside; nor was the popular judgment expressed on the day of publication, to be forgotten on the morrow. The contemplation of printed matter—books, match-boxes, or paper bags—

had not yet become a vice, and the people used their eyes to better purpose than in the deciphering of rubbish. But to-day all is changed. Readers are commensurate with the population, and no book achieves a genuine success that is not tossed aside as hastily as it is gobbled up. Size and speed are the two shining virtues in the world of letters as elsewhere—size in editions, speed in oblivion. And as the victory always goes to the biggest circulation, authors and publishers alike keep a steadfast eye upon the masses. The consequence is that the number of the books that are no books increases daily, vulgarity masquerades as humor, and the grossest sensationalism is mistaken for pathos. Meanwhile, the most popular criticism is pictorial, and may be seen on the hoardings. But it must be seen at once, or it is too late. We are all "hustlers" now; we cannot wait for the reasoned opinion of a quarterly review. The evening paper is a quicker, and therefore a surer, guide. Books once were rare treasures, kept carefully upon a dusted shelf for the use of future generations. To-day, six weeks is said to be the limit of their life, and the most of them do not deserve to be so long at large.

When the famous Education Act was passed, the unforeseen happened, as always happens after the thoughtless work of sanguine legislators. The vision of a contented, intelligent people, bent upon learning and eager for the diffusion of useful knowledge, was not realized. We found instead a restless, nervous mob, which could not keep its attention fixed for more than two minutes at a time, and to whose tastes a thousand ingenious persons were ready to pander. And then, strangest episode of all, the printed stuff, contrived for the ignorant, instantly captivated those who should have known better. The levelling process went on, sure enough,

but, as is usual with levelling processes, in a downward, not an upward, direction. And now at last we seem to have reached the lowest depth. Nothing that is serious has a fair chance of being read or considered. The favorite "literature" of the present day is snippets, which may be consumed between the jolts of an omnibus, or sniggered at between this station and the next on the tubular railway. In brief, the people, which once marvelled at Shakespeare and took a delight in Fielding, is satisfied with the pictured magazines, the invention of our own day, whose silly text is suitably matched with their meaningless illustrations.

Of course the printed matter of bustle and advertisement is in no sense literature. Yet in a literary outlook it cannot be disregarded. For not merely is it characteristic: it also obscures and obstructs the few real books, which come furtively from the press and are hidden in the indiscriminate mass. We are too near the publishers' announcements to distinguish between good and bad. The wood is so thick that we cannot see the trees. If the innumerable works dumped daily into the circulating libraries do no other harm, they make it increasingly difficult to find a masterpiece. And thus the real work of criticism must be left to posterity. For posterity has leisure, and need not submit to the idle prejudices which perplex the judgment of contemporaries.

Yet there is one quality, which we may disengage from modern books, which is of good augury. The best of our writers are inspired by a tireless curiosity. The works of biography, which rival even bad fiction in popularity, are evidence enough of a passion to penetrate the secrets of the past. There is no period which comes amiss to our young scholars, and, though their work be deficient in liter-

ary style, their ambition is as praiseworthy as their industry. The admirable achievement of the Historical Manuscripts Commission is sufficient to atone for a wilderness of bad novels; and that it has not been in vain is proved by the wise use that has already been made of its reports. It will be objected, with truth, that this is not literature. No, it is not. But it is the raw material of literature, which may be turned to noble purposes by a wizard's hand.

And it is not merely in this devotion to the past that we may see the signs of a general curiosity. Travellers' tales are welcomed as they were never welcomed before. Had he lived in our time, Columbus would have been the hero of the people. Even his less adventurous followers are secure of enthusiastic applause, and to describe a new land seems as great a feat as once it was to write a new epic. Strange myths and customs are sedulously collected and described now and again by real men of letters, such as Mr. Frazer, more often by bold adventurers whose rifle is mightier than their pen. And while strange countries and strange times are of constant interest, strange forms of poetry and prose still attract our younger writers. We, too, have had our movements, though we found them in Paris, and conducted them with less energy than our neighbors displayed *à-bas*. Decadence and symbolism, the fads and fancies of ardent youth, have not been without their champions in London; and though their insincerity, essential in a borrowed school, made nought of the experiments, the fact that they were tried at all suggests some kind of restlessness and energy.

But a far stronger influence has been at work upon literature and its study during the last thirty years than the poetry of France. Science, jealous and intolerant of all rivals, has not

merely demanded the extinction of the humanities; it has also invaded their province. At the outset men of science thought it prudent to conciliate the champions of literature. They quoted Lucretius, and attempted to prove that their researches were at least as good a means of culture as poetry or eloquence. And so they were admitted into our schools and flattered in our universities. But no sooner did they gain a firm footing than they changed their tactics. Not content with their own triumph, they are doing their best to impose their studies upon the whole world, and to exclude from school and college the classics which once they patronized. They assert to-day, with an arrogance which they hope will compel belief, that to dissect a frog's brain is a worthier method of education than the understanding of a Greek play. And their pride and insistency cannot but exert pressure upon literature. History, which Thucydides and Herodotus, Livy and Tacitus, Gibbon and Macaulay pursued as a beautiful art, is now claimed for a science, lest it should be out of fashion. But history is an art of presentation, as much as the writing of plays or the painting of portraits, and in so far as science has encouraged a false description, it has inflicted a serious wrong upon a noble branch of literature.

Curiosity and the scientific spirit, then, are dominant influences. But the fact that literature suggests influences, and not men, is an eloquent testimony to the poverty of these times. Leaving fiction out of the question, and forgetting poetry, which is moribund, we may comfort ourselves with the modest reflection that the general level of literary workmanship is excellent. If we have but few masters, we may boast that our journeymen know perfectly well how to use the tools of their craft. And there are more jour-

neymen to-day than any other age has known. But literary excellence seems to be like butter spread upon bread, the more widely it is diffused the thinner it becomes. And we cannot profess a sincere pleasure in our bustling age. After all, an epoch is known by its grandeur, not by its mediocrity, and we shall have but a poor bequest to make to our children's children.

Our only hope for the future is in reaction. Maybe the folly of newspaper and cheap fiction will wear itself out; maybe our readers will grow wiser and less numerous. For, though the one thing necessary to produce great literature is a great writer, a great writer is all the better for a wise encouragement. We have no faith in the cant which says that a man of genius is the product of his age; but a man of genius will have an easier chance of accomplishing his destiny if he is born in a world that feeds its mind on something better than chips, and bits, and snippets. And when the man of genius appears, he will have no lack of material. The curiosity which uncovers the past is matched by the curiosity which makes the present rich in enterprise and invention. But the very wealth of material is perplexing, and the path of originality is hard to find. The avenues are blocked; the ways of speech have been trodden by pattering feet until they are worn and dusty. Who, then, shall find a road yet unbeaten, and still fragrant with fresh flowers?

Je cherche une formule once said a French poet. Those among our writers who are sincere are also looking for a formula. He who finds it, as Sir Walter found it, as Wordsworth found it, as Byron found it, will discover a means of expressing anew the old emotions of human-kind. And he alone will be able to show us from which direction will come the salvation of English literature.

Charles Whibley.

LEVIATHAN AND THE HOOK.*

Because man is a spirit and unfathomable the past is really as startling and incalculable as the future. The dead men are as active and dramatic as the men unborn; we know decisively that the men unborn will be men; and we cannot decisively know anything more about the dead. It is not merely true that Nero may have been misunderstood; he must have been misunderstood, for no man can understand another. Hence to dive into any very ancient human work is to dive into a bottomless sea, and the man who seeks old things will be always finding new things. Centuries hence the world will be still seeking for the secret of Job, which is, indeed, in a sense the secret of everything. It is no disrespect to such able and interesting works as Professor Dillon's to say that they are only stages in an essentially endless process, the proper appreciation of one of the inexhaustible religious classics. None of them says the last word on Job, for the last word could only be said on the Last Day. For a great poem like Job is in this respect like life itself. The explanations are popular for a month or popular for a century. But they all fail. The unexplained thing is popular for ever.

There are weaknesses in the Higher Criticism, as a general phenomenon, which are only gradually unfolding themselves. There are more defects or difficulties than would at first appear in the scientific treatment of Scripture. But after all the greatest defect in the scientific treatment of Scripture is simply that it is scientific. The pro-

fessor of the Higher Criticism is never tired of declaring that he is detached, that he is disinterested, that he is concerned only with the facts, that he is applying to religious books the unbending methods which are employed by men of science towards the physical order. If what he says of himself is true, he must be totally unfitted to criticize any books whatever.

Books exist to produce emotions: if we are not moved by them we practically have not read them. If a real book has not touched us we might as well not have touched the book. In literature to be dispassionate is simply to be illiterate. To be disinterested is simply to be uninterested. The object of a book on comets, of course, is not to make us all feel like comets; but the object of a poem about warriors is to make us all feel like warriors. It is not merely true that the right method for one may be the wrong method for the other; it must be the wrong method for the other. A critic who takes a scientific view of the Book of Job is exactly like a surgeon who should take a poetical view of appendicitis: he is simply an old muddler.

It is said, of course, that this scientific quality is only applied to the actual facts, which are the department of science. But what are the actual facts? There are very few facts in connection with a work of literature which are really wholly apart from literary tact and grasp. That certain words are on a piece of parchment in a certain order science can say. Whether in that order they make sense or nonsense only literature can say. That in another place (say on a brick) the same words are in another order science can say. Whether it is a more

*"The Original Poem of Job." Translated from the Restored Text by E. T. Dillon. London: Fisher Unwin, 5s.

likely order only literature can say. That on two bricks there is the same sentence science can say. Whether it is the sort of sentence one man would write on two bricks, or two men happen to write on their own respective bricks, only literature can say. Let me take an example from Professor Dillon's own interesting introduction. Referring to a controversy among scholars about the possible indebtedness of the unknown Hebrew poet to other Hebrew writers, he says: "On the one hand it is doubtless possible that the words:

Art thou the first man born?
Or wast thou brought forth before the hills?

were suggested by the verses in Proverbs, "Before the mountains were settled, before the hills, was I brought forth." Of course it is possible, but I cannot see (as a matter of literary common sense) why it is in the smallest degree likely. Surely two independent people or two hundred independent people might use so natural a phrase as that a thing was older than the hills. We might as well bind together in chains of plagiarism all the people who ever said that a thing shone like the sun or bloomed and faded like a flower. Outside the use of hills (those rare objects) and of being brought forth (that unusual and pathological process), the two passages are not in spirit or inspiration in the least similar, for the passage in Proverbs (if I remember it aright) is an abstract, mystical excursus of which the point is that a Logos or idea, preceded all physical phenomena, whereas the passage in Job is simply a sharp, savage joke, of which the point is that a man is an uncommonly unimportant fungus on the face of the earth. No poet would naturally take a thing from one to use it in the other; but then to feel this is simply a matter of poetic senti-

ment and science is no more use in the matter than gardening. Science can only say that the same Hebrew word is used; but whether the word is common, or natural, or forced, or affected, or inevitable is a question of pure literature; and it is the whole question at issue. The Higher Critic, as such, can only see that the words are the same; that is, he can only see what a child could see.

Let it not be supposed that Professor Dillon's work is thus weak; he makes many wise suggestions and emendations. But when they are entirely wise they are also literary and entirely undemonstrable. To take one instance out of many, at the end of that noble Nihilist chapter three, in which Job curses his day, which is indeed the sublimest point of suicide, the very crest and imperial crown of cowardice, Job says in the authorized version: "For my sighing cometh before I eat and my roarings are poured out like the waters." This is evidently an extremely literary and ingenious rendering by the original translators of a passage of which they could not make head or tail. According to the later version the meaning is simpler and stronger and more in the manner of good primitive poetry. In Professor Dillon's book it runs "For sighing is become my bread, and my crying is unto me as water." This has all the elemental energy of the primeval phrase; it would be difficult to express with more directness what is the worst part of pain or calamity, the fact of the abnormal thing becoming the normal, disaster becoming a routine. We can all endure catastrophe as long as it is catastrophic; it is maddening the moment it is orderly.

In a sense this small matter expresses the whole of Job. Professor Dillon analyzes very well the main and obvious idea that it is a protest against that paltry optimism which sees in suf-

fering a mark of sin. But he does not, I think, quite pierce to the further and ultimate point of "Job," which is that the true secret and hope of human life is something much more dark and beautiful than it would be if suffering were a mark of sin. A mere scheme of rewards and punishments would be something much meaner and more mechanical than this exasperating and inspiring life of ours. An automatic scheme of Karma, or "reaping what we sow," would be just as gross and material as sowing beans or reaping barley. It might satisfy mechanicians or modern monists, or theosophists, or cautious financiers, but not brave men. It is no paradox to say that the one thing which would make suffering intolerable would be the thought that it was systematically inflicted upon sinners. The one thing which would make our agony infamous would be the idea that it was deserved. On the other hand, the doctrine which makes it most endurable is exactly the opposite doctrine, that life is a battle in which the best put their bodies in the front, in which God sends only His holiest into the hail of the arrows of hell. In the book of Job is foreshadowed that better doctrine full of a dark chivalry that he that bore the worst that men can suffer was the best that bore the form of man.

There is one central conception of the book of Job, which literally makes it immortal, which will make it survive our modern time and our modern philosophies as it has survived many better times and many better philosophies. That is the conception that the universe, if it is to be admired, is to be admired for its strangeness and not for its rationality, for its splendid unreason and not for its reason. Job's friends attempt to comfort him with

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philosophical optimism, like the intellectuals of the eighteenth century. Job tries to comfort himself with philosophical pessimism like the intellectuals of the nineteenth century. But God comforts Job with indecipherable mystery, and for the first time Job is comforted. Eliphaz gives one answer, Job gives another answer, and the question still remains an open wound. God simply refuses to answer, and somehow the question is answered. Job flings at God one riddle, God flings back at Job a hundred riddles, and Job is at peace. He is comforted with conundrums. For the grand and enduring idea in the poem, as suggested above, is that if we are to be reconciled to this great cosmic experience it must be as something divinely strange and divinely violent, a quest, or a conspiracy, or some sacred joke. The last chapters of the colossal monologue of the Almighty are devoted in a style superficially queer enough to the detailed description of two monsters. Behemoth and Leviathan may, or may not be, the hippopotamus and the crocodile. But, whatever they are, they are evidently embodiments of the enormous absurdity of nature. They typify that cosmic trait which anyone may see in the Zoological Gardens, the folly of the Lord, which is wisdom. And in connection with one of them, God is made to utter a splendid satire upon the prim and orderly piety of the vulgar optimist. "Wilt thou play with him as with a bird? Wilt thou bind him for thy maidens?" That is the main message of the book of Job. Whatever this cosmic monster may be, a good animal or a bad animal, he is at least a wild animal and not a tame animal; it is a wild world and not a tame world.

G. K. Chesterton.

FACIAL WIZARDING.

From time to time, apparently at pure hazard, without law, without warning, suddenly you see in the face of the child the man. In a moment, again, the vigorous man of forty becomes the old man of eighty. The fresh face of the graceful child will take on for a moment the heavy features of the hard and sensual-looking woman: the young girl is transformed into the comfortable motherly matron. More uncanny still, the very infant sometimes for a second, in a flash, assumes the face of old age. Backwards, too, in the delightful elderly lady appears the girl, real, radiant: but she comes not suddenly; phantom-like she seems to rise slowly, faintly, out of the elderly face you see in the flesh, and then in a moment of time and for a moment she stands before you complete. The happy old man, full of merry memories, expands into the boy of twelve. All this, no doubt, sounds only like scenes from a pantomime or the commonplaces of the fairy books. It does; that is just the effect these appearances leave on those who have eyes to see them, the awesome feelings of children at the transformations of fairy worlds. It is hard to think them merely neutral. Meditating on these strange sensations, one wonders whether they are not the origin of those familiar features of all folklore. Everywhere the wizard strikes children into old men and the good genius by a touch gives back youth to age. When suddenly, wholly unprepared, you see complete the full-grown man in the boy, or the smooth girl countenance shrink into the wrinkled elderly face, it is difficult not to conjure up some wholly external agency, some person, who works the change from without. It is generally so sudden, so unprepared, so manifestly put on externally.

We look about for a cause, for some one who did it. And we do not wonder that primitive men invented fays and wizards to fill the place of beings they felt must be there, but could not see. It is all natural enough, of course, in reality; we know all about everything now; we do not wonder now; we have put away such childishness; except just at the moment of the apparition, when our hair, if many of us told the truth, stands on end just as did the less knowing people's of earlier days. We do not believe in goblins; we have explained them away; but their ghosts revenge themselves by grinning at us from limbo: and we don't like their wraiths much more than our ancestors liked themselves. But the ghosts of goblins have no chance in the clear light; there is the difference. Once the eeriness is off us we become quite happy, quite brave, and we insult the lumps with a hardihood our forefathers could never command. So if for the moment the touch of a fairy wand seems necessary, we soon see clear and understand that these strange metamorphoses are but a freak of perfectly natural movements of the face. If we could trace exactly the course of physical growth and decay on the features and make a map of the inevitable writing of the wrinkles, we could draw from the face of the child the face of the man, and the old man, with something very near precision; though the uncertainty of expression would prevent a picture to the very life. And in fact many of the lines of youth and age are scientifically traceable, while we all recognize them by instinct. And no doubt what happens is simply that from time to time the play of the face or some feature of the face cuts deep one or more of the dominant age-wrinkles, or the aged countenance is

so moved as to smooth one out. And then we do the rest ourselves. We have a piece of the puzzle, a bone in a skeleton: a few pieces are quite enough; the rest is inference and imagination. We mentally work it out, though we seem to see the whole instantaneously. Why then can it not be done intentionally? Up to a point it can be. The play-actor knows that. He can make you up as you will be when you are old with considerable probability: but—it is a very different thing indeed from what we have been pondering. It is mechanical, and the other, however natural, is not mechanical. The divine something comes in after all.

Perhaps we should have considered
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the sceptic; you do not believe in these wondrous transformations? You have never seen one? And after all what can we say to that? Only that we have: and everyone that is fond of observing faces must have done so too, often. An unobservant person might easily miss such facial phenomena, for they come unexpected and are gone as quickly. But anyone who has seen the young face suddenly take on the old face, a very revelation of the future, will not forget it. It is interesting, but it is rather awesome, this sudden passage of time. Fortunately one cannot catch such a transformation on his own face. The chances of looking in the glass at the psychological moment are too small for that.

BOOKS AND AUTHORS.

Few Americans know their Japan as intimately and interpret it as effectively as Miss Alice Mabel Bacon. Her latest volume, "In the Land of the Gods," is a collection of short stories, some reflecting the folk-lore of the people, others breathing that ardent patriotism at which the world is marvelling—all told in a style beautifully clear and simple. If one more than the rest appeals to alien sympathy, it is "The Favor of Hachiman," a portrait of loyalty and mother-love not easily surpassed in any literature. Houghton, Mifflin & Co.

A charming book for children is "Lady Dear," by Millicent E. Mann, author of that other delightful story, "Margot, the Court Shoemaker's Child." Lady Dear is the little daughter of a Spanish nobleman who has sailed with Cristofor Colombo, and her adventures as chatelaine of the impoverished castle

include imprisonment by a scheming kinsman who comes to take possession, escape through a secret passage, and flight under the care of a friendly fool to the court of Queen Isabella. The illustrations, by Troy and Margaret Kinney, are uncommonly attractive. A. C. McClurg & Co.

Miss Repplier's graceful style and facile wit were never more delightful than in her latest volume, "In Our Convent Days." The daily routine, the system of rewards and penalties, the "congé sans cloche," the decorous theatrical performance, the visit from the benignant Archbishop, the court of love held by the little girls of the Second Cours out of devotion to the big girls of the First Cours, the geographical competition and the bouquet of "acts" for Reverend Mother's feast—each is vivaciously described, with a pungent aside, now and then, in Miss

Repplier's characteristic vein of light satire. But her warmest admirers will be surprised at the individuality which she imparts to the children themselves. A varied group, madcap or prig, they are genuine, actual, every one of them, and as a study of child life the book has a distinct claim to popularity. Houghton, Mifflin & Co.

In "The Man from Red Keg", a story of the lumber regions of central Michigan, some of the characters re-appear from Eugene Thwing's earlier story, "The Red-Keggers," and the description of a log-loading contest between two rival teams recalls the famous wood-sawing match. The author's familiarity with the scenes of which he writes is evidently close, and there is interesting material in his book. Its hero, too—a young man turned from vicious habits by the influence of a backwoods preacher, and inspired by him with the purpose of rescuing his bitterest enemy from the same courses—deserves commendation. The villain is the blackguard editor of a scurrilous sheet, and the plot ends—with an abruptness which suggests a second sequel—with his rescue by the law-abiding elements of the community from an attempt to tar and feather him. The literary quality of the book is not on a level with its moral intent, but it is readable, and to some boys and young men may prove a useful antidote to the yellow-covered novel. Dodd, Mead & Co.

Miss Betham-Edward's position as an officer of Public Instruction has given her unusual opportunities for the study of French habits and modes of thought, and her essays in "Cornhill" and other leading English magazines have been widely read and warmly appreciated. The handsome volume, "Home Life in France," of which A. C. McClurg & Co. are the American

publishers, contains much new material. Social usages, holiday customs, household expenses, domestic servants, the training of children, business openings for women, the country doctor, the curé and the Protestant pastor, the schoolmaster, the tax-collector and the *juge de paix*, the conscription, restaurant-keeping, experiences of travel, reformatories for boys, drawing-room fiction, the civil code in its relation to family life—all are treated with a lavish yet discriminating use of detail, a sympathy and a shrewd common sense which instruct as well as entertain the reader. There are twenty fine, full-page illustrations, most of them photographs from the works of contemporary artists.

To American readers, at least, "The House of Mirth" bids fair to be the novel of the season. No serial of recent years, with the possible exception of one or two of Mrs. Humphry Ward's, has been followed with so keen an interest by so large a circle of discriminating readers, and in book form the impression of concentrated force is even greater. Portraying the struggle of a woman, young and beautiful but hampered by narrow means, to keep afloat on the current of fashionable life, it introduces a large and various circle of minor characters, all drawn with that psychological subtlety and artistic finish which make Mrs. Wharton's work so notable. But in her central figure she touches a level of creative achievement which she has never reached before and on which she meets few rivals. Lily Bart, along every step of her wavering path between the sordid and the heroic, is real, living, lovable, and the strength of the appeal which her tragedy makes measures the power of the book as a protest against the social conditions which compel it. Charles Scribner's Sons.